



**Yosemite Area Regional Transportation System (YARTS)
Joint Powers Authority
MINUTES**

DATE

Monday, April 9, 2018

The regular meeting of the Yosemite Area Regional Transportation System (YARTS) Joint Powers Authority Board was held on Monday, April 9, 2018, at the Merced County Association of Governments, Front Conference Room, 369 W. 18th Street, Merced, CA and conducted by video/teleconference at the Mariposa County Government Center, Board of Supervisors Chambers, 5100 Bullion Street, Mariposa, CA, Fresno Council of Governments, 2035 Tulare Street, Suite 201, Fresno, CA, and Sierra Center Mall, Board of Supervisors Conference Room, Third Floor, 452 Old Mammoth Road, Mammoth Lakes, CA and was called to order by Chair Smallcombe at 1:02 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Stacy Corless, Mono County Supervisor, Vice Chair (via videoconference)
Bob Gardner, Tuolumne County Supervisor (via videoconference)
Daron McDaniel, Merced County Supervisor
Miles Menetrey, Mariposa County Supervisor
Jerry O'Banion, Merced County Supervisor
Rosemarie Smallcombe, Mariposa County Supervisor, Chair (via videoconference)

MEMBERS ABSENT

Rhonda Armstrong, Council Member, City of Kerman
John Gray, Tuolumne County Supervisor
Nathan Vosburg, Council Member, City of Coalinga
Tom Wheeler, Madera County Supervisor

OTHERS PRESENT

Peggy Arnest, Fresno County (via teleconference)
Denise Demery, VIA Adventures
Darin Grossi, Tuolumne County Transit Agency
Kathleen Morse, NPS (via videoconference)
Candy O'Donel-Browne, Chair, Authority Advisory Committee (via videoconference)
Curtis Riggs, VIA Adventures
Gordon Shaw, LSC Transportation Consultant (via videoconference)

STAFF PRESENT

Cindy Kelly, Assistant Transit Manager
Navneet Mattu, Transit Administrative Assistant
Patrick Pittenger, Executive Director
Artis Smith, Transit Director
Joy Young, Administrative Assistant II

1. Introductions

Chair Smallcombe led the introductions.

2. Public Comment

None.

3. Oral Report - Authority Advisory Committee Chair or Designee - Recommendations

Chair Candy O'Donel-Browne gave the report from the Authority Advisory Committee and stated that the meeting went well and hopes that everyone approves the recommendation from the Authority Advisory Committee. Chair O'Donel-Browne mentioned that she supports the current contractor for service for the Short Range Transit Plan.

4. Minutes of the January 22, 2018 YARTS Joint Powers Authority Meeting

Director O'Banion moved to approve the minutes of the January 22, 2018 YARTS Joint Powers Authority meeting.

Seconded by Director McDaniel.

Ayes - Directors Smallcombe, Corless, Menetrey, McDaniel, O'Banion

Noes - None

Abstain - Director Gardner

MOTION CARRIED.

5. Information/Discussion Only

- a. Monthly Ridership and Customer Service Report for December 2017 - February 2018
- b. YARTS Ridership History
- c. YARTS Financial Report/Budget Update
- d. Minutes of the January 17, 2018 YARTS AAC meeting

Cindy Kelly stated that there has been some decline at certain locations in regard to ridership but overall there has been an increase in ridership. Ms. Kelly mentioned that there is a small increase in Amtrak passengers that are taking YARTS and the numbers appear promising.

Chair Smallcombe asked for the reason behind the decline in ridership. Ms. Kelly responded that this time of the year is slow, but cumulatively there is an overall increase in ridership. Kathleen Morse mentioned that YARTS might have different schedules compared to the park employee's schedules and the employees might be driving instead of taking YARTS. She stated that it could have had a slight impact on the ridership numbers.

Chair Smallcombe asked if FEMA was used for the sinkhole project in Mariposa. Ms. Kelly responded that FEMA was used for the sinkhole project.

Ms. Kelly mentioned that the Authority Advisory Committee gets the Joint Powers Authority meeting minutes for information.

6. YARTS Social Media Statistics First Quarter 2018

Cindy Kelly mentioned that the two most significant social media accounts for YARTS are the Facebook page and the YARTS website. She also stated that the average visitor engagement for the year was 2959 hits per week on Facebook and the YARTS website had over 212,000 views in the first quarter of 2018.

Ms. Kelly reported that the United States continued to be the first of the top 10 countries where visitors are from. She also mentioned that on pg.45 there is data including how many uses Mobil devices and tablets for our YARTS website.

Ms. Kelly informed the committee that as the free days are approaching we notice increases on YARTS Facebook page in regard to questions and concerns for the free days. She also mentioned that YARTS Facebook site is now linked with YARTS Twitter site.

Chair Smallcombe thanked Ms. Kelly for the ridership charts and the user data from YARTS website.

Chair Smallcombe asked about the bounce rate shown on the website data. Ms. Kelly responded that it refers to the number of times people come back to the YARTS website, after clicking on another link.

7. YARTS Reservation System Update

Cindy Kelly gave an update on the YARTS reservation system stating that YARTS entered in the 2nd year of online reservations and the statistics were provided for January - March 2018.

Ms. Kelly mentioned that people have already started to request summer schedules. The monthly passes are being built and we are hoping to initiate them by May 1st, 2018. Ms. Kelly also stated that staff is working on the reservation system to make it better.

Ms. Kelly mentioned that we have \$39,000 in revenue as of the date of the report and the data changes daily.

Chair Smallcombe asked if YARTS is on track with yearly projection. Ms. Kelly reported that we have \$148,000 of additional revenue and YARTS is on track.

Director Coreless asked about reservation numbers for Hwy 41. Ms. Kelly responded that she doesn't know them but will email them out to the members.

Darin Grossi asked about the percentage of seats that are booked for reservations. Ms. Kelly stated that less than 50% of the seats are used for reservations and rest of the seats are for the walk-ons.

8. YARTS Free Day Update

Cindy Kelly reported that there was a great turnout for the free service days and the ridership increased from last year. Ms. Kelly stated that November 11th, 12th and January 15th were free service days on YARTS and the next free service dates are April 21st and 22nd. In November, a quarter of the ridership was from the free days.

Ms. Kelly stated that the promotion of free service days in April is going great in collaboration with UC Merced; we are cross promoting. UC Merced is promoting YARTS free service on Earth day while YARTS is promoting the Shakespeare event from UC Merced in Yosemite.

Chair Smallcombe asked if the staff will be conducting surveys for the free days from the riders. Ms. Kelly stated that YARTS will be collecting basic demographics data via Survey Monkey from the passengers and the data will be presented to the board in July.

9. YARTS/NPS Cooperative Agreement - Amendment No. 4

Cindy Kelly stated that this is the fourth year of the five-year Cooperative Agreement. The final modification of the amendment has been approved by the National Park Service. Once finalized, it will be executed by the Executive Director.

10. Mariposa County/YARTS Annual Agreement for Services, Fiscal Year 2018 - 2019

Cindy Kelly informed the committee about the annual agreement between YARTS and Mariposa County for providing services and funding. Ms. Kelly stated that it has not changed from the last year.

11. YARTS/Fresno Council of Governments Agreement Fiscal Year 2018 - 2019 Amendment No. 2

Cindy Kelly stated that YARTS is entering into its third year of contract with Fresno Council of Governments (FCOG). Ms. Kelly informed the committee that Amendment No. 2 to the YARTS/FCOG contract has been reviewed and signed by Counsel and the Executive Director and is currently being processed by the Fresno Council of Governments.

12. YARTS Summer 2018 Schedules

Cindy Kelly informed the committee of the YARTS 2018 Summer Schedules. Ms. Kelly mentioned that the schedules have been released to the public and will be distributed along each corridor, except for Mono County. Ms. Kelly stated that we are printing schedules in house this year and we have them personalized for each of the corridors. Ms. Kelly stated that we have deleted a few stops from the Merced Corridor to save time and costs of operation.

Director Menetrey asked about the denotation of REQ on the schedules. Ms. Kelly responded that REQ means "requested stop", and the passengers must inform the driver of the REQ drop off location when boarding. Ms. Kelly stated that the REQ stops are only for drop off's.

Kathleen Morse stated that the schedules look great.

13. YARTS Operations Plan for Emergencies and Other Critical Events

Cindy Kelly stated that staff has developed an Operations Plan for Emergencies and Other Critical Events. Ms. Kelly mentioned that the website is about 50% effective and Facebook is about 30% effective when it comes to emergency notifications. Ms. Kelly stated that we will deliver the Operations Plan along with the schedules to each corridor.

Ms. Kelly mentioned that this past weekend YARTS used the Operations Plan during the rockslide which closed the Hwy 140 entrance. Kathleen Morse commented that the Operations plan was very helpful, and the park staff appreciates the hard work behind creating one for emergency situations.

Darin Grossi asked about an incident where Tuolumne riders were stranded by YARTS and there was communication barrier between YARTS drivers and the management team. Chair Smallcombe asked how does YARTS pass information in emergency situations. Ms. Kelly mentioned that YARTS will soon have a text alert system that will pass information to the park, employees, guests, partner agencies, drivers and the staff for emergencies and any other critical events.

14. Appointment to the YARTS Authority Advisory Committee - Whitney Lennon, Mono County Representative

Director Coreless asked that this item be removed from the agenda and postponed until the July meeting.

Director McDaniel moved to remove Item 14 from the agenda and postpone until the July meeting.
Seconded by Director Corless.

Ayes - Directors Smallcombe, Corless, Gardner, Menetrey, McDaniel, O'Banion

Noes - None

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

15. Low Carbon Transit Operations Program (LCTOP)

Cindy Kelly informed the committee that this is the first time YARTS has ever received LCTOP funds. Ms. Kelly stated that YARTS will provide discounted fares in Merced for low income passengers starting July 1st, 2018. Ms. Kelly mentioned that this program will accommodate 425 adults and 100 children in the City of Merced, and free rides to over 1800 eligible passengers in Mariposa County.

Director O'Banion stated that the discounted fares should be for countywide disadvantaged communities instead of just the City of Merced.

Staff will follow up with Caltrans regarding the inclusion of the County of Merced as part of the LCTOP program.

Director O'Banion moved to adopt Resolution No. 2018-0216 authorizing the Acceptance of Funds and Projects under the Low Carbon Transit Operations Program and authorizing the Executive Director as the Designated Agent and to include all of Merced County instead of just the City of Merced as a qualifying disadvantaged community.

Seconded by Director McDaniel.

Ayes - Directors Smallcombe, Corless, Gardner, Menetrey, McDaniel, O'Banion

Noes - None

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

16. Public Hearing - Fiscal Year 2018 - 2019 Caltrans 5311(f) Funding and Resolution

At this time, a public hearing was opened for public comment.

Opened: 2:06 p.m.

Closed: 2:10 p.m.

No public comments were received.

Cindy Kelly mentioned that the Intercity Bus 5311(f) Program has been a longstanding source of funding for YARTS and the primary aim of the program is to assure that rural residents have access to the Intercity Bus in urban areas. Ms. Kelly stated that the funding cycle is open as of now and the application has become competitive.

Chair Smallcombe stated that letters of support are encouraged from the jurisdictions to include in the application process.

Director Corless moved to:

- a. Hold a public hearing to allow for public comments on the application for funds from the Caltrans 5311(f) grant program for fiscal year 2018 - 2019; and
- b. Adopt Resolution 2018/04-09-01 authorizing funding under FTA Section 5311 (49 U.S.C. Section 5311) with the California Department of Transportation.

Seconded by Director McDaniel.

Ayes - Directors Smallcombe, Corless, Gardner, Menetrey, McDaniel, O'Banion

Noes - None

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

17. YARTS/MCAG Agreement for Services Fiscal Year 2018 - 2019

Cindy Kelly reported that since 1999, Merced County Association of Governments (MCAG) has provided transit service management and marketing, financial and grant administration, and transportation planning services to the YARTS Joint Powers Authority (JPA) through service agreements. Ms. Kelly stated that the proposed costs of services is less in comparison to the previous years.

Director O'Banion moved to authorize the Chair to sign the Agreement for Service between the Yosemite Area Regional Transportation System and Merced County Association of Governments for a period of one year commencing on July 1, 2018, and terminating on July 30, 2019.

Seconded by Director McDaniel.

Ayes - Directors Smallcombe, Corless, Gardner, Menetrey, McDaniel, O'Banion

Noes - None

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

18. YARTS 2017 - 2018 Budget Amendment No. 2

Cindy Kelly informed the committee that YARTS has been awarded additional funding for FY 2017-18 and requires board action to allocate and spend the funding. Ms. Kelly reported that the changes that are made to the budget are: inclusion of \$3,353 from the State of Good Repair Program and decrease of the State Transit Assistance Funds by \$1,671.

Director O'Banion moved to approve Budget Amendment No. 2, which includes additional funding from the State Transit Assistance program (STA), Quarter No. 2.

Seconded by Director McDaniel.

Ayes - Directors Smallcombe, Corless, Gardner, Menetrey, McDaniel, O'Banion

Noes - None

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

19. Public Hearing - YARTS Fiscal Year 2018 - 2019 Budget

At this time, a public hearing was opened for public comment.

Opened: 2:15 p.m.

Closed: 2:16 p.m.

No public comments were received.

Cindy Kelly informed the committee that the YARTS Bylaws require the approval of an annual budget for the upcoming fiscal year by April 15, 2018. Ms. Kelly stated that the budget as presented anticipates an increase in operations costs, based on bids received for the new contract. Ms. Kelly mentioned that a portion of the wage costs will be covered on the Fresno project.

Director Corless moved to:

- a. Hold a public hearing to allow for public comments on the proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2018 - 2019; and
- b. Approve the proposed YARTS budget for Fiscal Year 2018-2019.

Seconded by Director Gardner.

Ayes - Directors Smallcombe, Corless, Gardner, Menetrey, McDaniel, O'Banion

Noes - None

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

20. Election of Officers for the YARTS Joint Powers Authority Fiscal Year 2018 - 2019

Cindy Kelly reported that according to Article V, Section 4 of the YARTS Bylaws provides for the election of officers at the last regular meeting prior to July 1st of each year. Ms. Kelly stated that this will be the last scheduled meeting of this fiscal year, a new Chair and Vice Chair need to be elected.

Director Corless moved to nominate and approve Director McDaniel as Chair of the YARTS Joint Powers Authority for the Fiscal Year 2018-2019.

Seconded by Director Menetrey.

Ayes - Directors Smallcombe, Corless, Gardner, Menetrey, McDaniel, O'Banion

Noes - None

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Director McDaniel moved to nominate and approve Director Menetrey as Vice Chair of the YARTS Joint Powers Authority for the Fiscal Year 2018-2019.

Seconded by Director O'Banion.

Ayes - Directors Smallcombe, Corless, Gardner, Menetrey, McDaniel, O'Banion

Noes - None

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

21. Approval of the Fiscal Year 2018 - 2019 YARTS Joint Powers Authority and YARTS Authority Advisory Committee Meetings

Director Corless moved to approve the following meeting dates:

- July 23, 2018
- October 22, 2018
- January 14, 2019
- April 8, 2019

Seconded by Director McDaniel.

Ayes - Directors Smallcombe, Corless, Gardner, Menetrey, McDaniel, O'Banion

Noes - None

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

22. Continued Discussion of the Addition of Voting Members to the YARTS Joint Powers Authority

Cindy Kelly informed the committee that at the YARTS Joint Powers Authority meeting in January, the Board of Directors expressed an interest in expanding the YARTS Board to include voting members from Tuolumne, Madera and Fresno Counties. Ms. Kelly stated that currently these counties are non-voting members of the YARTS Board. Ms. Kelly specified that the funding contribution will be addressed in the Short Range Transit Plan.

Director McDaniel responded that he is supportive of the inclusion of the non-voting members on YARTS board. He also stated that the service will improve with the addition of voting members to the YARTS board.

Director Menetrey offered support for the non-voting agencies to come onboard.

23. Oral Report - National Park Service Report

Kathleen Morse gave the National Park Service report stating that they are short staffed, and they only have one person in the human resources department. Ms. Morse mentioned that it is only April and Yosemite has already experienced 4-5 days of road closures. She informed the committee that there wasn't significant damage caused by the flooding in the park.

Ms. Morse mentioned that Yosemite is starting the busy summer season and the park will have a new pilot program to decrease traffic congestion in the park. The park had recently tested a pilot program at the Horsetail Falls with positive results. The rock fall zones will be monitored by the staff from Caltrans and the employees will have to use a by-pass route. Ms. Morse announces that the Mariposa Grove will open on June 15th, 2018.

Chair Smallcombe applauded the park for the pilot programs.

24. Short Range Transit Plan Update - LSC Consultants

Gordon Shaw informed the committee that the LSC Transportation consultants are working with YARTS on the Short Range Transit Plan and will be conducting on-board transit surveys on Highway 140 route on April 12th and 14th, 2018. Mr. Shaw mentioned that the key issue is the bus replacement plan. Mr. Shaw stated that the consultants are developing the information from various sources and the board will make the final decision. He reported that the overall approach is to come up with business plan for the next five to seven years.

25. Director's Discussion - Miles Menetrey

Director Menetrey started the discussion of invisible ceiling buses for YARTS. Director Menetrey stated that the invisible ceiling bus model is extremely hard to find in the USA. He mentioned that YARTS buses will have a great visibility with the invisible ceiling and he also pointed out that the Yosemite National Park is interested in electric buses. Kathleen Morse mentioned Rush Creek vans in comparison to the invisible ceiling buses.

26. Directors' Remarks

Director Menetrey stated that he is planning to attend the July meeting in Mono County, if possible.

**THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS OF THE YARTS JOINT POWERS AUTHORITY THE MEETING WAS
ADJOURNED AT 3:07 p.m.**