



**Yosemite Area Regional Transportation System (YARTS)
Authority Advisory Committee
MINUTES**

DATE

Wednesday, July 11, 2018

The regular meeting of the Yosemite Area Regional Transportation System (YARTS) Authority Advisory Committee (AAC) held Wednesday, July 11, 2018, at the Merced County Association of Governments, Front Conference Room, 369 W. 18th Street, Merced, CA and conducted by video/teleconference at the Sierra Center Mall, Board of Supervisors Conference Room, Third Floor, 452 Old Mammoth Road, Mammoth Lakes, CA, Fresno Council of Governments, 2035 Tulare Street, Suite 201, Fresno, CA and Mariposa County Government Center, Board of Supervisors Chambers, 5100 Bullion Street, Mariposa, CA and was called to order by Chair Candy O'Donel-Browne at 10:10 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Candy O'Donel-Browne, Mariposa County Economic Development Corp.
 Karen Baker, California Welcome Center, Merced
 Jim Donovan, Yosemite National Park
 Sandy Hogan, Mono County LTC (via teleconference)
 Terri Peresan, Mariposa County Department of Community Services (via videoconference)
 Hub Walsh, Private Citizen

MEMBERS ABSENT

Tom Dumas, Caltrans, District 10
 Layla Forstedt, Fresno/Clovis Conference and Visitors Bureau
 Lisa Mayo, Tuolumne County Visitors Bureau
 Michelle Miller, Yosemite/Madera County Visitors Bureau
 Jeff Simpson, Mono County Economic Development
 Steve Smallcombe, Upper Merced River Watershed Council
 Moses Stites, Fresno Rural Transit
 Nanette Villegas, Merced Mall
 Sean Williams, Holiday Inn Express
 Vacant, Fresno
 Vacant, Mono

OTHERS PRESENT

Peggy Arnest, Fresno Council of Governments (via teleconference)
 Denise Demery, VIA Adventures
 Jonathan Farrington, Yosemite/Mariposa Tourism Bureau (via videoconference)
 Gordon Shaw, LSC Transportation Consultant (via videoconference)

STAFF PRESENT

Nav Bagri, Finance Director
 Navneet Mattu, Transit Admin. Assistant
 Patrick Pittenger, Executive Director

1. **Introductions**

Candy O'Donel-Browne led the introductions and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

At this time, it was stated that the committee did not have a quorum and no formal action could be taken on agenda items.

2. **Public comment**

Candy O'Donel-Browne presented a passenger's complaint concerning the connection between YARTS and Amtrak. She mentioned that the passenger had to wait for more than two hours for the connection. Candy suggested that YARTS should make a better connection with Amtrak.

3. **Minutes**

At this time, no quorum was present and no formal action was taken.

4. **Information/Discussion only**

- a. Monthly Ridership and Customer Service Reports for March 2018 - May 2018
- b. YARTS Ridership History
- c. YARTS Financial Report/Budget Update
- d. Minutes of the April 9, 2018, YARTS Joint Powers Authority meeting (to be approved at the July 23, 2018, JPA meeting)

Sandy Hogan commented that the ridership data appears steady from the past three years.

Hub Walsh asked if YARTS is at a loss of \$70,000 according to the YARTS Financial Report/Budget table on page 40. Nav Bagri stated that \$70,000 is a variance and YARTS is at a good position with net income of \$139,140.

5. **Social Media Statistics Second Quarter 2018**

Patrick Pittenger stated that the average visitor engagement on Facebook page is 57 thousand and in the previous year it was 35 thousand. Patrick mentioned that YARTS has seen a positive trend on social media in comparison to previous years.

6. **Reservation System Update**

Patrick Pittenger gave an update on the YARTS reservation system stating that YARTS has received a total revenue of \$81,000 thru the reservation system for the months January - June 2018.

7. **Free Day Update**

Patrick Pittenger reported that there was a great turnout for the free service days on Memorial Day weekend. Patrick asked Dense Demery if she had any updates on July 4th free day. Denise Demery mentioned that the overall ridership on the free day was enormous but doesn't recall the exact numbers.

8. **VIA Trailways Revised Zero Tolerance Drug and Alcohol Testing Policy and Resolution**

The committee agreed by consensus to support the recommendation to the YARTS Joint Powers Authority to accept the revised VIA Trailways Zero Tolerance Drug & Alcohol Testing Policy 2018; and adopt Resolution 2018/07-23-01 accepting the revised VIA Trailways Zero Tolerance Drug and Alcohol Testing Policy.

Terri Peresan asked if the action items will be presented to the JPA members during the JPA meeting on July 23rd, 2018 even though YARTS AAC doesn't have quorum to vote. Candy O'Donel-Browne mentioned that in order to pass the action items to the JPA committee, the AAC doesn't have to approve the items. Hub Walsh mentioned that AAC made no formal action on this agenda, but no concerns were made, therefore it can be passed on to the JPA committee.

9. **Fare Increase Options, Process and Timeline**

The committee agreed by consensus to support the recommendation to the YARTS Joint Powers Authority to approve staff recommendation (Option A) to take no action and wait for the Short Range Transit Plan to address revenue increasing options.

Patrick Pittenger reported that Cindy Kelly primarily did the staff report on the Fare Increase Options, Process and Timeline. Patrick reported that YARTS has contracted with VIA Trailways for the next two years; YARTS is in a stable position for the first year but in a short fall for the second year of contract. Patrick stated that there are many different options to get to the stable position: fare increases, contribution from other county members, decrease in service and many other options. Patrick informed the committee that Gordon Shaw has provided YARTS staff with very informative "Working Papers" for review. Patrick suggested that the correct move at this time would be to take no action and wait for the SRTP to address revenue increasing options.

Gordon Shaw commented that the fare increase option is a part of a wide range of options and the plan is premature as of now.

Hub Walsh commented that any adjustment in service can be done along with the fare increase.

10. **2018-2019 Budget Amendment No. 1**

The committee agreed by consensus to support the recommendation to the YARTS Joint Powers Authority to approve 2018-19 Budget Amendment No. 1, which includes additional funding from Caltrans 5311(f) Intercity Bus Program grant for operating assistance, in the amount of \$61,186 for FY 2018-19.

Nav Bagri mentioned that there is an addition of \$61,186 for operating revenue for FY 2018-19. The amount of award increased from \$222,000 in FY 2017-18 to \$283,186 for FY 2018-19.

11. **Oral Report - National Park Service Report**

Jim Donovan gave the National Park Service report stating that construction in the park is complete and Mariposa Grove has opened to the public. Jim mentioned that there will be various projects starting in the upcoming months; Tioga road construction and more parking space to improve the customer experiences. Jim informed the committee that on the opening day of Mariposa Grove there were approximately four thousand visitors. Jim commented that the shuttle system is working well and thanked YARTS and VIA for the hard work to support the opening of Mariposa Grove.

12. **Short Range Transit Plan Update**

Gordon Shaw informed the committee that the LSC Transportation consultants wrote “Working Papers” and “Summary of Surveys Paper”. Both reports are provided to YARTS staff for review. Gordon informed the committee that the Working Papers contain demographic information, key visitor area and detailed data of YARTS service. Gordon reported that the overall approach is to break down the current service into subcategories: ridership, fare revenues, seasonal runs, popularity of direct runs and connection between other transit systems. Gordon stated that as of now, the SRTP is an open process and any suggestions are welcomed.

Sandy Hogan questioned if everyone will get a change to review the draft before the release. Gordon Shaw responded that the final draft will be provided to everyone before the release.

13. **Transit Director’s Report**

Patrick Pittenger reported that Cindy Kelly is being supported by other staff members. He said YARTS is a strong system and will continue to grow.

14. **Member Remarks**

Sandy Hogan apologized for coming late to the AAC meeting.

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS OF THE YARTS AUTHORITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE, THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 11:06 A.M.