



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

DATE

Monday, April 27, 2020

The regular meeting of the Yosemite Area Regional Transportation System (YARTS) Joint Powers Authority (JPA) Board was held on Monday, April 27, 2020 via teleconference/videoconference and was called to order by Vice Chair Silveira at 1:08 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Miles Menetrey, Mariposa County Supervisor, Chair
Scott Silveira, Merced County Supervisor, Vice Chair
Stacy Corless, Mono County Supervisor
Bob Gardner, Mono County Supervisor
Daron McDaniel, Merced County Supervisor
Rosemarie Smallcombe, Mariposa County Supervisor

MEMBERS ABSENT

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

OTHERS PRESENT

Denise Demery, VIA Adventures
Kathleen Morse, Yosemite National Park
Curtis Riggs, VIA Adventures
Tyler Summersett, Tuolumne County Transportation Council

STAFF PRESENT

Christine Chavez, Transit Manager
Xavier Garcia, Transit Administrative Assistant
Nav Bagri, Finance Director
Stacie Guzman, Executive Director
Emily Haden, Legal Counsel
Adam Perez, Multimedia Specialist
Mary-Michal Rawling, Public Affairs Manager

1. Introductions

Vice Chair Silveira led the introductions and called the meeting to order at 1:08 p.m.

2. Public Comment

None.

3. Minutes of the April 6, 2020 YARTS Joint Powers Authority meeting

No questions. So noted.

Director McDaniel moved to approve the minutes of the April 27, 2020 YARTS Joint Powers Authority regular meeting.

Seconded by Director Corless.

Ayes - Directors Corless, Gardner, McDaniel, Silveira, Smallcombe

Noes - None

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

4. COVID-19 Situational Update

a. Update from National Park Service on Park Closure Status

Kathleen Morse reported that the park closure remains in effect and there are currently no reported cases of COVID-19 in the Park or in Mariposa County. The Park is following state and county guidelines for reopening and is working with an Interagency Coordination Team of three counties – Mariposa, Tuolumne and Madera – to determine the best way to approach re-opening. There is a possibility the Park could re-open some internal operations in early May, but the Park will not re-open to visitors until sometime after that.

Director Gardner asked who could be contacted regarding the opening of Tioga Road and what the schedule might be.

Kathleen Morse replied that the Park does not anticipate opening Tioga Road any earlier than May 31st, but questions can be directed to Cicely Muldoon or Kevin Killian.

b. YARTS Operations in Response to COVID-19

Chair Menetrey presided over the meeting at 1:22 p.m.

Curtis Riggs commented that he agrees with the staff recommendation to remain at the current level of service. He understands there is concern about the budget and stated that the loss of farebox revenue could be offset by cost savings from continuing to operate on a reduced schedule through the month of May. Fuel costs are down significantly as well, which would provide an additional cost savings. Lastly, he commented that their contract states if service hours change by more than 15%, a change in rate could be discussed. He would like to work with MCAG to address that situation should a continued reduction in service hours occurs.

Director McDaniel asked if Curtis Riggs was able to access any funding through the CARES Act.

Curtis Riggs replied that VIA Adventures has applied for the Economic Injury Disaster Loan and the Payroll Protection Program but has yet to receive a response.

Director Silveira commented that he agrees with the staff recommendation to continue operating on the emergency schedule but suggested moving from the summer schedule to the winter schedule since ridership is very low.

Chair Menetrey asked if moving to the winter schedule would keep the most heavily used runs.

Christine Chavez replied that the Board has the authority to modify the schedule as needed, such as removing two of the most underperforming runs.

Stacie Guzman commented that the direction needed from the Board would be to implement the winter schedule on Highway 140. The schedule could then be adjusted to fit areas of high ridership.

Christine Chavez mentioned that farebox makes up 15-17% of the fiscal year's revenue, so the shortage this year amounts to an additional shortage for next year.

Director McDaniel moved to direct staff to:

1. Change the Highway 140 service levels to the winter Minimum Schedule II and;
2. Delay the roll-out of summer service.

Seconded by Director Gardner.

Ayes - Directors Corless, Gardner, McDaniel, Menetrey, Silveira, Smallcombe

Noes - None

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

5. Management Report

Stacie Guzman reported that a ridership update will be presented at the next YARTS JPA meeting on May 11, 2020. YARTS is continuing to work with federal and state agencies on CARES Act funding. She had a phone conversation with staff at the state and was reassured that some funding would be coming through the CARES Act for 5311(f) recipients, but the amount of that funding is still unknown.

6. National Park Service Report

Kathleen Morse reported that the Park is working on developing a plan for reopening in phases. The Park hopes to develop appropriate systems during the month of May to ease into a reopening schedule. An adaptive strategy method is being implemented to protect the health and wellbeing of the employees and local communities while also gradually working towards allowing overnight accommodations to take place within the Park.

Director Smallcombe asked where Park residents go for COVID-19 testing.

Kathleen Morse replied that the Park has limited testing capabilities at the local clinic.

7. Board Member Remarks

None.

8. Adjournment

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS OF THE YARTS JOINT POWERS AUTHORITY, THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 2:01 p.m.