

Ross Valley Yellow Bus Transportation Services

Joint Exercise of Powers Agreement

Joint Committee

March 21, 2022

6:00 PM

Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88330374132?pwd=L2l1VWpmOVhPOXA4eWdjODdTenaVjvQT09>

Meeting ID: 883 3037 4132

Passcode: 779027

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL 6 PM

JEPA Board members:

Town of San Anselmo: Brian Colbert, Dave Donery
Town of Fairfax: Renee Goddard, Heather Abrams
County of Marin: Katie Rice/Absent, Nancy Vernon
Ross Valley School District: Wesley Pratt, Marci Trahan

Marin Transit: Christopher Whitlock, Nancy Whelan

Fairfax Council Member Renee Goddard introduced new Town Manager Heather Abrams.

No member of public to speak in open time.

II. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Persons wishing to address the Joint Exercise of Powers (JEPA) Joint Committee on subjects not on the agenda may do so at this time. Please note, however, that the JEPA is not able to undertake extended discussion or action on items not on the agenda. Matters requiring action will be referred to the joint committee or staff or placed on a future JEPA meeting agenda. Please limit your comments to three (3) minutes.

III. JEPA BUSINESS MEETING

Item	Presenter	Action
A. Accept September 13, 2021, Meeting Minutes	Chairperson	Approve

M/S Brian Colbert, Nancy Vernon to accept the September 13, 2021, minutes. Unanimous approval.

B. Ross Valley School District Update JEPA Board Member Information

Superintendent Marci Trahan reported that enrollment numbers were anticipated to be flat for next year at White Hill and Hidden Valley. Masking is now optional, and principals are reporting that more kids are taking them off now, but some children don't yet feel comfortable. Students are being respectful of their fellow student's choice.

San Anselmo Council member Brian Colbert thanked Trahan for keeping the students in school during COVID.

Trustee Wesley Pratt stated that RVSD was now moving into Basic Aid vs. LCSF (local control) funding and District was unsure at this time of the impact. Status could go back and forth year to year as a "teeter" district. Trahan and team will continue to monitor and watch. Many unknowns still be to be determined.

No Public Comment.

C. 2021/22 Program Update/Future Service Planning Marin Transit Information

Operations Analyst Chris Whitlock presented number of one-way passes sold by school and type – 524 total for White Hill, 45 for Hidden Valley and 8 for Ross Valley Charter. More passes were sold in the mornings than afternoon, but 3 routes sold out in the afternoon. There has been a decline in enrollment at White Hill and decline in pass sales. White Hill enrollment is expected to drop about 10% school year 2022-23 to 600 students.

RVSD School Transportation Parent Survey was sent to White Hill and Hidden Valley parents to determine current modes of transportation, gauge effectiveness of discount for late-departing afternoon route and collect data for future service planning. Survey was conducted in February 2022 and had total of 192 respondents from White Hill and Hidden Valley. 74% were current bus pass holders while the remaining 26% were not.

Approximately 55% of students used same mode of transportation as before the pandemic; 92% reported late-bus discount wasn't a factor in their decision to purchase a route. Comments from parents completing survey: more afternoon service, too expensive, commendations, driver conduct, scheduling complaint. Survey takeaways – families use other modes of transportation in the afternoon as opposed to morning, afternoon discount doesn't impact decision, cost of passes a concern for families.

Fairfax Councilmember Renee Goddard asked for breakdown of information broken out by school if possible.

Service Planning

Whitlock shared objectives for 2022-23 service planning: implement survey feedback, focus on pain points (afternoon service, empty seats on departing buses), maximize available resources along main corridors of service area and primary destinations (SFD/Butterfield and San Anselmo Hub).

Two options presented. Option A to extend WH 11 to Red Hill Ave via Butterfield or Option B to extend WH 11 to San Anselmo Hub and stop at places along SFD. Both would result in delayed service to Charter (minimal impact). Whitlock asked for feedback on extension – more service on SFD or Butterfield?

Colbert stated that either option is an improvement given empty seats currently on WH 11. He asked which option would accommodate the most students? Whitlock replied that currently 60 are on Butterfield waitlist and 29 on San Anselmo HUB waitlist.

Goddard asked for more information about delay for charter students. Meeting Attendee Sharon Sager replied that the school would be implementing full day aftercare in 2022/23 which would allow for the 3 students that have bus passes to remain at school until bus arrives.

Other considerations - update stop times on schedules to reflect current traffic patterns and address open seats on sold-out routes. To make seats available to existing yellow bus pass holders on a first come basis, White Hill staff would be needed to facilitate. The late-departing pass price would also need to be raised to full price. The late bus would give students a backup if they didn't get on the earlier bus.

D. Measure AA Yellow Bus Funds and Term Renewal Marin Transit Information

Marin Transit General Manager Nancy Whelan introduced item. A new three-year term begins in July for Measure AA (2022-25). Funds are allocated to yellow bus programs in the County and provide a subsidy based on the one-way price and number of passes distributed. Funds cover 10 to 20% of total program cost.

For the first 3-year term, Ross Valley yellow bus program received \$132,956 plus additional \$30,000. Uncertain what funding scenario will look like for the new three-year term: if 5 schools participate, \$190,057; if six participate, \$184,209; Marin Transit Board considers approval on June 6, 2022.

E. FY 2021/22 Budget Review/FY 2022/23 Budget Draft Marin Transit Information

Whitlock stated amount of 2021/22 prices - \$505 for one way pass, \$425 for late afternoon discounted passes and \$100 for income qualified passes. Overall, a 33% reduction in sales in 2021/22. Was the first year with five busses. Michaels currently has a fuel contingency charge.

Two options for 2022/23 presented: Option A- continue with 5 bus program and raise one way price from \$505 to \$515. Late afternoon discount and income qualified pass prices remain the same as do Town and County contributions. Contractor expenses will increase plus fuel contingency. Option A shows a deficit of \$42,000.

Option B – continue with 5 bus program, no discounted price for late departing routes, assumes a 6% reduction in pass sales due to declining enrollment. Option B shows a deficit of \$47,000.

How to close the deficit: increase one way pass to \$585? more contribution from Towns and County? Or other?

Goddard asked if there were grant opportunities. Pratt asked about \$13,000 for bus parking – buses are currently parked on County property.

Whelan asked members of JEPA (San Anselmo, Fairfax, County) to confirm amount of local contributions for 2022/23 to plan budget.

Colbert replied that it's important to keep pass price below \$600 and suggested asking County for more funding. Goddard stated that we need to try to be creative and keep one way pass price at \$515. Fairfax Town Manager Heather Abrams asked Marin Transit when they needed feedback from towns. Whelan replied that budget information is needed by the end of April so the lottery and passes can go on sale in May.

Colbert stated that he was seeing more students on e-bikes. Goddard replied that e-bike riders legally were supposed to be 14 years old. Pratt expressed concern with safety of so many students on bikes and was shocked that bus pass could potentially be over \$600. And that it was already mayhem after school at White Hill.

Whelan offered to meet with informal group to review budget and explore different scenarios with levers available, whether that be pass price, no more reduced price, increased contribution from County and Towns, etc... Colbert asked Whelan if Marin Transit reduced its cost in 2021/22 and she replied yes.

Vernon to organize ad hoc committee to review budget and discuss potential solutions for addressing deficit and keeping pass price close to current.

Colbert stated that San Anselmo Council would be happy to have a conversation about increasing contribution by an additional \$5,000 but would want to know what other partners are doing. Marin Transit agreed to come to San Anselmo and Fairfax Town Council meetings in early April to discuss.

Next meeting will be in late April to set pass price and adopt 2022/23 budget. Passes will go on sale in late May.

Public comment. Sagar suggested that Marin Transit contact Girl Scout Council to see if bus parking possible at Bothin.

E. Set date, time, location, and agenda topics Chairperson Approve

Next JEPA meeting will be held on April 25 at 6pm via zoom.

IV. BOARD MEMBER REPORTS

V. ADJOURNMENT 7:30 PM - to the next regular meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Vernon
County of Marin