

Ross Valley Yellow Bus Transportation Services

Joint Exercise of Powers Agreement

Joint Committee

March 21, 2023

5:30 PM

In person:

San Anselmo Town Council Chambers, 525 San Anselmo Ave, San Anselmo, CA 94960

Zoom Meeting Link for Public Access:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82393664708?pwd=akREeThCUUlwdDRLUGxNVWdPZ21SZz09>

Meeting ID: 823 9366 4708 Passcode: 739676

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL 5:30 PM

JEPA Board members:

Town of San Anselmo: Steve Burdo, Dave Donery

Town of Fairfax: Stephanie Hellman/absent (Chance Cutrano/alternate), Heather Abrams

County of Marin: Katie Rice/Absent, Nancy Vernon

Ross Valley School District: Chris Landles-Cobb, Marci Trahan

Marin Transit: Christopher Whitlock, Nancy Whelan, Kyle French

San Anselmo Council Member Brian Colbert thanked the JEPA members for their work.

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. Elect Office Members	Chairperson	Approve

M/S Dave Donery, Marci Trahan to nominate Supervisor Katie Rice as chair. Unanimous approval.

B. Accept October 10, 2022 Meeting Minutes Chairperson Approve

M/S Marci Trahan, Dave Donery to accept the October 10, 2022 minutes. Unanimous approval.

C. Program Update and Future Service Planning Marin Transit Update

Marin Transit Operations Analyst Chris Whitlock gave the 2022/23 program update. Current service is a 5-vehicle program operated by Michael's Transportation. Serves White Hill Middle School, Hidden Valley Elementary, and Ross Valley Charter, with 85% of bus pass holders attending White Hill. Since White Hill and Hidden Valley dismiss students at the same time, the afternoon service requires that buses return to White Hill to pick-up the remaining students.

Currently, a total of 527 one-way passes are distributed at White Hill, 505 at full price (\$515) and 22 at the income qualified price (\$100). Hidden Valley one-way passes nearly doubled from 47 to 79 in school year 2022/2023. A total of 613 one-way passes sold FY 2022/23 YTD. COVID led to a significant drop in ridership, most notably at Ross Valley Charter.

There are now 4 sold-out afternoon routes at White Hill with students waitlisted. The waitlist for WH-12 reduced 2022/23 (from 60 to 22) given route adjustments. Many of these students on the waitlist have signed up for other routes.

FY 2023/24 service planning includes adjusting route schedules once staggered bell times are finalized, setting pass-price and determining pass distribution/lottery process.

D. Yellow Bus RFP Recommendation

The evaluation panel recommends Bauer's Transportation. They have 30 years of experience in transportation, currently partner with local schools (Branson and Marin Academy), have a 24-hour dispatch center and maintenance staff and importantly, utilize RidePal tracking and routing technology (students tag on and off).

San Anselmo councilmember Steve Burdo asked staff to make sure the tracking service does not sell or give out user information. Marin Transit Operations Manager Kyle French noted that the tracking app is through invite only and only for the route purchased. RVSD Superintendent Marci Trahan said some children have multiple households and asked if app would be accessible for 3rd or 4th parents. Staff to check. Trahan also said RVSD would encourage and assist parents to download app given the important information they will be provided (e.g., late buses). Marin Transit noted that technology could potentially help to find a way to put students on the earlier bus.

Councilmember Burdo asked about state contribution for home to school transportation. Superintendent Trahan responded that currently the state reimburses a portion of school district funding for mandated transportation for homeless or disabled students. She commented on a state reimbursement plan rolling out based on 60% of 20/21 transportation costs. Councilmember Cutrano asked how other school districts in Marin are dealing with the increased cost of yellow bus. Marin Transit responded that Miller Creek offers discount for purchasing both directions. For the RVSD program, Marin Transit reduced pass-price 20% for late-departing buses but this reduction did not lead to increased sales.

Fairfax Town Manager Heather Abrams asked Superintendent Trahan if students were staying on campus for after-school activities that could create opportunity for later bus. Superintendent Trahan notes that yes, some students are after school, for play practice, sports, etc.. but generally get picked up later.

Whitlock presented 4 and five 5 scenarios for Bauer's. An estimated budget required an increase in one-way pass price for both options –\$915 for one way pass price with five buses, \$585 for one way price for four busses. Income qualified passes will remain \$100.

Councilmember Cutrano asked about town contributions – currently set at \$35,000 from San Anselmo and Fairfax. Measure AA funds are 20% of total contribution.

Councilmember Burdo asked if it was true that California rates lowest in providing yellow bus access. Council member Cutrano asked if Marin Transit had done an analysis on ownership and management.

Whitlock presented scenario comparison between 4 and 5 bus scenarios. For the 4-bus scenario, pass-price increase is more sustainable and can maximize vehicle efficiency by combining undersold routes. But will result in longer wait time at WH for late-departing routes. The 5-bus scenario would maintain current route structures and service level, but would call for a significant pass-price increase and assumes that local contributions increase by approx. \$20,000 annually to meet the Measure AA contributor match requirement.

Superintendent Trahan asked about bus occupancy and asked if the RidePal tracking would allow for a way to sell passes in real time when spots were open. Whitlock noted the tap system could allow for more efficiency and it could be possible but would take a lot of coordination with White Hill staff. Bus capacity is fifty for middle school.

RVSD Trustee Chris Landles-Cob asked for clarity regarding the price increase for adding one bus. Whitlock explained a yellow bus would cost \$993 daily for 180 days, \$150,000.

Public Comment. San Anselmo Council member Brian Colbert had the following questions and comments: challenge of not owning busses or having place for them to park. With 4 buses or a higher pass-price, will we be exacerbating the issues with students on ebikes and too many riders on public transit? Is there an opportunity to provide a free ride for the income qualified students? Could we build in an equity component, so the pass-price is framed to help the underserved? Is the morning demand the same as the afternoon demand?

D. Set date, time, location and agenda topics for next meeting

Next JEPa meeting will be held on April 17 at 6:30pm in the San Anselmo Town Council chambers. JEPa to decide if virtual option provided for public access. Goals for meeting: set FY 2023/24 budget and pass price and determine upcoming pass distribution process.

- iv. **BOARD MEMBER REPORTS**
- v. **ADJOURNMENT - to the next regular meeting**

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Vernon
County of Marin