



Ross Valley Bus Transportation JEPA

Ross Valley Yellow Bus Transportation Services
Joint Exercise of Powers Agreement Joint Committee
March 18, 2024 - 5:30 PM
Fairfax Women’s Club - 46 Park Road, Fairfax, CA 94930

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

JEPA Board members:

Town of San Anselmo: Steve Burdo, Dave Donery
Town of Fairfax: Stephanie Hellman, Heather Abrams
County of Marin: Katie Rice
Ross Valley School District: Chris Landles-Cobb, Marci Trahan

II. CLOSED SESSION

CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL - ANTICIPATED LITIGATION

Significant exposure to litigation pursuant to California Government Code Section 54956.9(b)(1): Number of potential case(s) one.

The open session for all other agenda items will begin no earlier than 6:15 PM.

III. 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.

IV. JEPA BUSINESS MEETING ITEMS

	<u>Presenter</u>	<u>Action</u>
A. Elect Officers	Chairperson	Approve
B. Accept meeting minutes from November 11, 2023 & January 18, 2024	Chairperson	Approve
C. 2023/2024 Operations Update	Marin Transit	Information
D. 2024/2025 Pass Sales & Service Options	Marin Transit	Information
E. 2024/2025 Draft Budget & Pass Pricing	Marin Transit	Information
F. Set date, time, location, and agenda for next meeting	Chairperson	Information

V. BOARD MEMBER REPORTS

VI. ADJOURNMENT - to the next regular meeting

GENERAL PUBLIC INFORMATION

ASSISTANCE FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact Zach Koblack de Leon, at zach.koblackdeleon@marincounty.org. Notification at least 48 hours prior to the meeting will enable the Joint Committee to make reasonable accommodation to help insure accessibility to this meeting.

AVAILABILITY OF INFORMATION

Any writings or documents provided to a majority of the JEPA joint committee regarding any item on this agenda after the distribution of the original packet will be made available for public inspection at the public counter at San Anselmo Town Hall located at 525 San Anselmo Avenue.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

Public Hearings provide the general public and interested parties an opportunity to provide testimony on these items. If you challenge any proposed action(s) in court, you may be limited to raising only those issues you or someone else raised at the Public Hearing(s) described later in this agenda, or in written correspondence delivered to the Joint Powers Agency at, or prior to, the Public Hearing(s)

TIMING OF ITEMS ON AGENDA

While the JEPA attempts to hear all items in order as stated on the agenda, it reserves the right to take items out of order. No set times are assigned to items appearing on the JEPA agenda.



Meeting Minutes

AGENDA ITEM IV.B - ACCEPT MEETING MINUTES FROM NOVEMBER 11 AND JANUARY 18

Ross Valley Yellow Bus Transportation Services

Joint Exercise of Powers Agreement

Joint Committee

November 7, 2023

6:00 PM

San Anselmo Town Hall

525 San Anselmo Ave, San Anselmo, CA 94960

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL 6:00 PM

JEPA Board members:

Town of San Anselmo: Steve Burdo, Dave Donery

Town of Fairfax: Stephanie Hellman, Heather Abrams (absent)

County of Marin: Katie Rice, Nancy Vernon

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

Marin Transit: Christopher Whitlock, Nancy Whelan, Kyle French

II. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

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III. JEPA BUSINESS MEETING

Item	Presenter	Action
A. Accept April 17, 2023, Meeting Minutes	Chairperson	Approve

M/S Dave Donery, Steve Burdo to accept the April 17, 2023, minutes. Unanimous approval.

B. 2023/24 Operations Update	Marin Transit Information
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Marin Transit Operations Analyst Chris Whitlock reported on current operations and service level and one-way pass sales year to date – FY23/24 Total 640 up from 573 FY22/23. Total reflects White Hill, Hidden Valley, and Ross Valley Charter. Ridership is up by 4% over FY22/23 with 8 routes with 50+ students vs. 3 routes. Bus program estimated to remove 270 AM vehicles and 215 PM vehicles from the road to alleviate traffic congestion.

August start up service for Bauer's did see several issues including late departures caused by traffic, vehicle mechanical issue and scheduling error. From early September to mid-October, 87% of 448 trips operated within on time parameters (defined as 10 minutes).

Service issues recorded on August 24, September 26, October 4, and October 6. In event of cancellations, Marin Transit staff works closely with schools' personnel to develop a plan that guarantees all students are provided with alternative transportation options.

To accommodate San Anselmo construction project at Memorial Park, Marin Transit staff deployed a plan to move all students to the public bus stops on Sir Francis Drake (SFD/SF Blvd and SFD/Sunny Hills Dr). The original stop at Memorial Park will be reopened after receiving confirmation from San Anselmo that the project is completed.

Dave Donery, San Anselmo town manager, reported that completion is expected in early December.

Parent registration is now open for Ridepal, a mobile app that provides real-time location of busses. The app will allow alerts and cancelation messages to be sent to registered parents/guardians. Before Ridepal was offered, Marin Transit sent out alerts. Some texting was initially blocked by providers, but Marin Transit has now remedied by using 800 number vs. local.

Marin Transit is experiencing an increase in customer service duties: YTD 32 prorated refunds processed (up from 10 in same period FY22/23), 65 pass reprints and approximately 3,000 email exchanges with schools and families.

Considerations for FY2024/25 include streamlining the pass distribution and lottery process, bell time coordination, simplification or enhancement of other program customizations.

Ross Valley School District Superintendent stated that it would be difficult to make bell changes in the next school year but open to discussions.

San Anselmo Mayor Steve Burdo asked if Bauer's is a union shop, if a compliance target in Bauer's contract and about potential refunds. Marin Transit replied that Bauer's is a union shop, there's no compliance target goal at this point since no GPS tracking and currently there's a no refund policy but prorating is offered for passes surrendered. Mayor Burdo suggested testing texting capabilities with providers to determine issues of blocking before launching.

Fairfax Council member Stephanie Hellman asked about putting into place a multi-channel communication strategy moving forward to ensure that parents and students are notified when necessary.

Members of the public spoke about their experience with the service:

- Great need for reliable bus service
- Hidden Valley students disproportionately affected by unreliable service.
- Families and caregivers greatly impacted by late busses (e.g., late to work, stress/anxiety of leaving child with others)
- No reliable communication
- Would prefer to have Michaels back as bus provider – what was impetus for change?

Marin Transit Director Nancy Whelan responded that Marin Transit went through RFP process as government requirement. Bauer's was selected for the Ride Pal app along with other qualifications.

Bauer's President Mike Stubin apologized for the unreliable service and reported changes in progress to improve service:

- All buses will now come from parking lot as Los Gatos (vs. San Francisco)
- Bus supply has now improved – four new busses will be rolling out into the system and older busses will be traded out.
- Five bus drivers are in training and one fully trained ready to go into the system; can act as back up drivers when needed.
- RidePal app will provide reliable communication and does provide push notifications.

Mr. Stubin noted that he will be looking at metrics in the future.

Supervisor Katie Rice commented the need for smoothing out the bumps in the system given the impacts to families and the amount of work unreliable service caused for Marin Transit. She asked Marin Transit to track hours to make sure they are paid for their work.

C. Set date/time/location/agenda topics for next meeting Information

Next JEPa meeting will be held in San Anselmo chambers (pending any scheduling conflicts) on January 18th at 5:30pm in person.

IV. BOARD MEMBER REPORTS

v. ADJOURNMENT - to the next regular meeting

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Vernon
County of Marin

**Ross Valley Yellow Bus Transportation Services
Joint Exercise of Powers Agreement
Joint Committee
January 18, 2024
6:00 PM
San Anselmo Town Hall
525 San Anselmo Ave, San Anselmo, CA 94960**

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL 6:00 PM

JEPA Board members:

Town of San Anselmo: Steve Burdo, Dave Donery

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

County of Marin: Katie Rice

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

Marin Transit: Nancy Whelan, Kyle French, Robert Betts

Director Rice explained that due to an RVSD special meeting being held this evening members Hellman, Trahan and Landles-Cobb are not able to attend. Councilmember Cutrano's (Fairfax alternate) attendance achieves quorum allowing the meeting to continue.

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There were no public commentators on this item.

III. JEPA BUSINESS MEETING:

A. Accept November 7, 2023 meeting minutes

Chair Rice requested that this item be tabled until the JEPA's next meeting to allow Member Hellman to participate.

B. 2023/24 Operations Update:

Kyle French provided presentation reviewing service operations for the month of December including overview of program scope and participation, operations update, service monitoring and performance tracking by bus/route, status of the RidePal bus tracking mobile app, adaptation and usage. [Slide presentation included with posted agenda.] The presentation also included considerations/issues for discussion by JEPA and community for next year's program. These items will be discussed at March and April JEPA meetings.

Mike Stewman, Bauer's President, covered slide 6 which provided detail regarding change in service/vehicle deployment on December 22. Due to a driver calling in sick on the 22nd, and without a certified yellow bus driver available to pick up the routes, Bauer's deployed three vans (and drivers) to cover route #2 and #7.

In response to questions asked by Board Members, Mr. Stewman explained yellow bus service requires a special certification. With the regular driver having called in sick, and the back-up driver also out with COVID, Mr. Stewman had no other yellow bus certified drivers available to drive the routes. He therefore used employees trained and legally certified for Van transport to drive the routes. Mr. Stewman explained that the schools were notified, RidePal and messaging sent to parents. See slide #6 for detail.

Mr. Stewman also provided information on the RidePal app which continues to be glitchy, problematic, and unreliable. He explained that the app is in the process of being rebuilt and he anticipates a new version to be ready by March or April.

In response to questions regarding service performance: Kyle explained that per industry metrics, Routes are considered on-time when within 5 minutes of schedule at first stop of route. Per this metric, on time performance ranged from 95-98% of routes for all service deployed in December. By industry standards, this would be considered excellent on-time performance for public transit service. It is also much improved over prior months.

Public Comment:

Commenters provided input and complaint regarding RidePal app, citing its unreliability, challenges to signing up for use, multiple step process, lack of confidence in information being provided by the app, etc. They cited these elements and others as to the reason so few families are signing up for the app.

Commenters acknowledged improvement in bus service, but serious lack of improvement in communication. They stressed how critical having accurate, reliable communication is towards providing safe, reliable transportation. They stressed need for a back-up communication method because the App just isn't working.

There were requests for refund on bus pass price, given app failure. Requests were made to use

text messaging as has been done in the past. Commenters expressed disappointment and frustration with communication and the need for Bauer's and/or the JEPA to address. Many commenters also acknowledged improved service, professionalism of drivers, and their hope that communication issues get resolved as soon as possible.

Member Burdo requested that data on a.m. drop off time at school be included in the next performance summary, while acknowledging that things (traffic) can happen between first stop and school drop off that are beyond Bauer's control. He also suggested that Bauer's take advantage of user groups/parent input/ testing in App rebuild process.

Mr. Stewman stressed his commitment to "getting it right."

Member Cutrano noted the 6-8 weeks or more between now and when App rolls out, and that it is critically important that communication needs are met during that period.

C. Date/Time of next meeting:

Chair Rice to work with MT staff and members to schedule March and April Meeting Dates. Topics to be discussed: FY 24/25 Pass sales/lottery process; budget and staffing for Marin Transit, Bell times, and others.

Once calendared (soon) they will be shared with public/posted on website.

IV. MEMBER REPORTS

There were no member reports.

V. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Rice adjourned the meeting at 7ish.



Operations Update

**AGENDA ITEM IV.C
2023/24 OPERATIONS UPDATE**



Spring Operations and Performance Tracking

- RidePal – removal of Ross Valley routes and rebuild
- Alerts only via text message as of February 1st
- Operation Updates
- On Time Performance:

Bus	Routes	Dec	Jan	Feb
Bus 1	WH-1 & HV-1 AM	98%	99%	99%
Bus 2	WH-2 & WH-7	95%	98%	96%
Bus 3	WH-5 & WH-8	96%	96%	97%
Bus 4	WH-6 & WH-18	98%	97%	98%

Bus	Routes	Dec	Jan	Feb
Bus 1	HV-1 PM & WH-14	98%	99%	99%
Bus 2	WH-12 & WH-13	95%	98%	96%
Bus 3	WH-9 & WH-15	96%	96%	97%
Bus 4	WH-10 & WH-16	98%	97%	98%

*AM routes – **PM routes***

Routes are considered On Time when within 5m of schedule.





2024/2025 Bus Pass Sales and Service Options

**AGENDA ITEM IV.D
2023/24 OPERATIONS UPDATE**



Background: Historic Pass Sales and Buses

School Year	Pass Price*	Pass Sales				Total Buses	WH PM Early Trips (within 20 minutes)	
		WH	HV	Ross Valley Charter	Total			
16-17	\$ 350	924	67	0	991	6	6	
17-18	\$ 375	909	63	33	1,014	6	6	
18-19	\$ 395	851	56	25	934	6	7	
19-20	\$ 485	804	42	20	866	6	7	
20-21	NO SERVICE - COVID							
21-22	\$ 505	460	45	5	510	5	4	
22-23	\$ 515	527	79	7	613	5	4	
23-24	\$ 575	540	100	5	645	4	4	

* Pass price shown in table represents full price. Reduced price has been offered in all years to qualified families.

Background: Operations

- **Buses are contracted by the day**
 - AM or PM only service is nearly the same price as all day
 - Largest buses seat 52 middle school or 78 elementary school students
- **All buses are used twice in the AM and PM**
 - Staggered AM schedules allow 100% of demand to be fulfilled
 - Single bell time at White Hill **in the PM** creates unfulfilled demand for buses that leave within 10 minutes of bell time
 - Second PM buses serve students approximately 35-40 minutes after the bell time
 - Staggering of bell times between Hidden Valley and White Hill allow all Hidden Valley students to have service right after PM bell time

Background: Bus Pass Sales Challenges

- **PM Demand for earlier departures at White Hill exceeds bus capacity**
 - Lack of increasing program revenue has reducing bus supply over time
 - Waitlists for PM service occur every year
 - Parents are unhappy all year and try all year to get students on earlier departing buses
- **Historic “first come/first served” bus pass process led to significant customer service issues**
 - Parents were unable to log on and purchase at pre-established time
 - Orders failed to process
- **Lottery process was put in place to create a level playing field among pass purchasers**
 - Lottery creates a significant amount of staff work without a decrease in customer service time

Background: Pass Sales Demand (PM White Hill)

- **Price does not seem to significantly impact pass sales**
 - Reduced pass price is offered to qualifying families
- **Since the start of the lottery, approximately 80% of families who enter the lottery purchase a pass**
- **Year over year, PM bus pass sales are consistently distributed across the same stops**
 - ~ **45%**: Butterfield
 - ~ **25%**: San Anselmo Hub/Red Hill
 - ~ **15%**: Memorial Park
 - ~ **10%**: Sir Francis Drake (San Anselmo)
 - ~ **5%**: Fairfax

2024/25 Service & Bus Pass Sales Goals

- Simply pass sales/administration, remove the lottery
- Maintain financial stability while keeping pass price as low as possible
- Focus on congestion relief in the SFD corridor
- Better serve demand for PM service

2024/25 Service and Pass Sales Options

1. Restructure White Hill routing to meet targeted demand*

2. Prioritize White Hill riders by age (younger students vs older students)

- *Not recommended because it would be challenging to administer, and routing would be inefficient (longer student ride times)*

3. Add service to meet PM White Hill demand

- *Not recommended because it would increase the pass price significantly (assumes no additional revenue)*

4. White Hill PM bell time adjustments (spread PM demand)

- *Lowest cost, greatest service levels for families*
- *Not recommended because Marin Transit does not control school schedule*

* staff recommendation

Option 1: Restructure White Hill Service

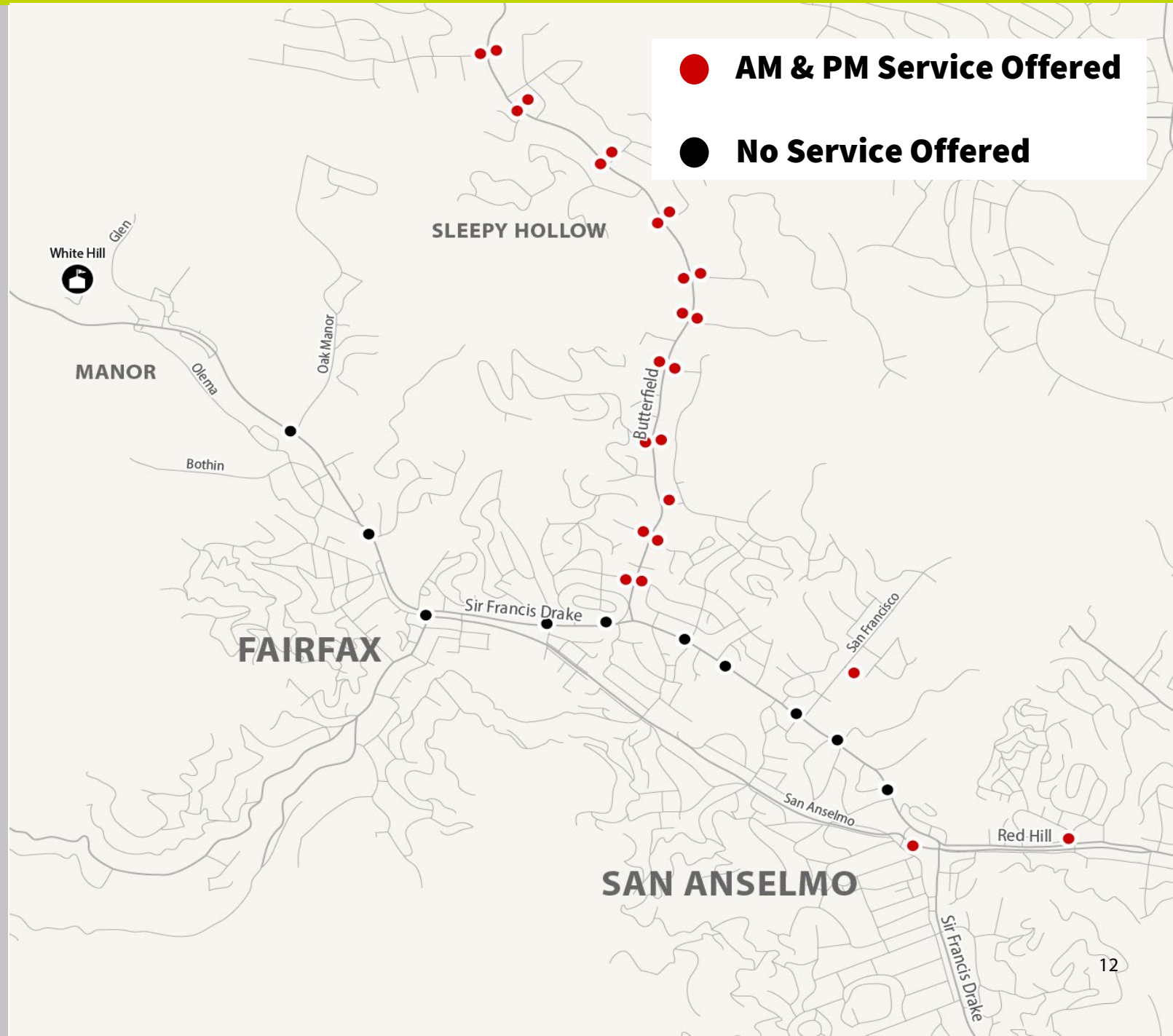
Limit yellow bus service to
select stops*:

- Butterfield
- Memorial Park
- San Anselmo Hub
- Red Hill

Remove service to RVC

No change for Hidden Valley

** A variation of this option would be to offer AM service to all stops and limit only the PM stops*



Option 1 – Service Restructuring Justification

- Reducing PM White Hill demand removes the need for a lottery process
 - Reduces programs costs (admin) for customer service and pass management
- Focuses yellow bus service on geographic areas that lack public transportation service
- Simplifies bus service options for parents
 - Butterfield + Memorial Park + Hub/Red Hill: Yellow Bus
 - Sir Francis Drake/Fairfax: Public Transit
- Focuses on reducing traffic congestion and VMT on the SFD corridor

Pass Option Comparisons

			2024/25 Options			
			1	2	3	4
			Restructure White Hill Routes & Stops	Prioritize Passes for Younger Riders	Increase Number of Buses	Adjust PM Bell Times
Description	2023/24 Est Actual	2024/25 Est Actual	Only offer service to select stops* during AM & PM	Offer yellow bus service to only select grades (e.g. 6 & 7 graders)	Keep 4 AM buses, increase PM buses to 6	Stagger PM release times (at least 20-30 minutes) at White Hill to shift ~ 100 students earlier or later
# Buses	4	4	4	4	6	4
Total Passes Sold (est)	640	640	550	525	700	700
Total Program Cost (est)	\$818,000	\$962,000	\$895,000	\$895,000	\$1,315,000	\$895,000
One Way Pass Price (est)	\$575	\$850	\$675	\$700	\$1,200	\$550



2024/2025 DRAFT Budget and Pass Pricing

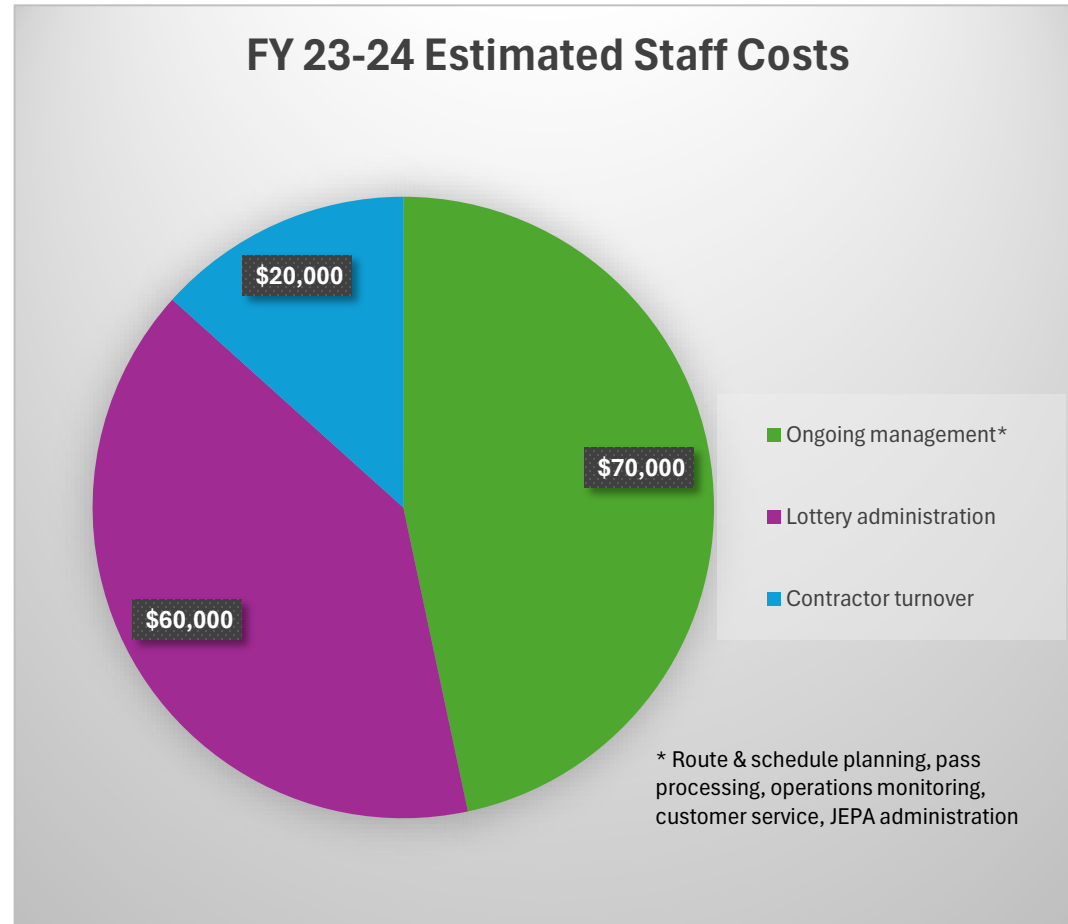
AGENDA ITEM IV.E 2023/24 OPERATIONS
UPDATE



FY 23-24 Budget – Estimated Actual

Pass Sales	Estimated	Actual
FULL PRICE		
Charter one way passes	3	4
White Hill one way passes	497	499
Hidden Valley one way passes	62	72
REDUCED PRICE		
Charter one way passes	4	2
White Hill one way passes	20	38
Hidden Valley one way passes	14	24
Total Passes Sold	600	639
Bus Pass Revenue	\$ 326,000.00	\$ 335,425.00
Surplus / Deficit	\$ 49,540.00	\$ 58,682.00

FY 23-24 Marin Transit Staff Costs



- Staff costs have been higher than historical averages due to lottery (pass sales) management, contractor turnover, and customer service
- FY 23-24 budgeted staff costs: \$35,000
- FY 23-24 est. actual staff costs: \$150,000
- Marin Transit plans to absorb the higher costs for FY 23-24

Marin Transit Staff Cost Comparison

Marin Transit Staff Costs	Staff Costs	% of Total Expenses
FY 23-24 Adopted Budget	\$35,000	4.3%
FY 23-24 Estimated actual at year end, including turnover	\$150,000	16.1%
FY 24-25 Estimate including lottery process, without turnover	\$130,000	13.6%
FY 24-25 Proposed/ recommended, without lottery process, without turnover	\$70,000	7.8%

FY 24-25 Budget Assumptions

- Option 1 service restructuring implemented
- One -way pass price increases to \$675; reduced pass price remains at \$75
- Pass payment options are the same (single payment or two payments)
- Enrollment is stable
- Ratio of full price and reduced price passes sold remains constant
- County and Towns' contributions increase 4% to meet required Measure AA match
- Measure AA allocation increases by about 5%
- Contract rate increases 4.9%
- Staff costs stabilize at \$70,000

Pass Sales Assumptions

Option 1

Budget Assumptions	Pass Sales		
	Full Price		Full
		<i>Charter one way passes</i>	0
		<i>White Hill one way passes</i>	425
		<i>Hidden Valley one way passes</i>	70
		Total # of one way Passes Sold - Full Price	495
	Reduced 50% - Income Qualified		Reduced
		<i>Charter one way passes</i>	0
		<i>White Hill one way passes</i>	25
		<i>Hidden Valley one way passes</i>	30
		Total # of one way Passes Sold - Reduced 50%	55
		Total of All Passes Sold	550
Bus Pass Prices			Total
	<i>Full price one-way pass price</i>	\$ 675.00	\$ 334,125.00
	<i>Reduced price pass</i>	\$ 75.00	\$ 4,125.00

Estimated Revenue and Expenses

Option 1

Revenue	
Pass Sale Carry Forward	\$ 58,862.00
Bus Pass Revenue	\$ 338,250.00
Two Payment Processing Fee - \$11.50 x 2 x passes sold	\$ 6,831.00
Refund/Cancellations	\$ (1,500.00)
Replacement pass sales	\$ -
Single use pass sales	\$ -
Total Measure AA Formula Funds Carry Forward AA	\$ 325,000.00
County of Marin	\$ 104,000.00
Town of San Anselmo	\$ 36,920.00
Town of Fairfax	\$ 36,920.00
Ross Valley School District	\$ -
Ross Valley Charter	\$ -
Grant Funding	\$ -
Total Revenue	\$ 905,283.00

Expenses	
Daily Rate/Bus	\$ 1,099
Contractor Expense (RVSD)	\$ 791,280.00
Contractor Surcharge Contingency (RVSD)	\$ -
Consulting	\$ 5,000.00
Fare Processing Charges	\$ 13,803.24
Marketing	\$ 500.00
Fuel Contingency	\$ -
Bus Parking in Marin County	\$ 13,971.95
Marin Transit Operations Oversight and Customer Service	\$ 70,000.00
Bus Driver Incentive	\$ -
Total Expenses	\$ 894,555.19
Surplus/Defecit	\$ 10,727.81



FY 24-25 Pass Sales Release Plan and Schedule

Activity	Dates
JEPA Meeting to finalize budget and pass price	April 15
Update website and on-line store	April 15 – May 6
Update parents on FY 24-25 program <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Routes and stops- Pass prices- Pass sales start date	May 6 - 19
Pass sales begin	May 20
Pass processing and distribution	Summer

Next Steps – JEPA April 15, 2024 Goals

- Confirm service and schedules
- Confirm pass price
- Confirm budget including County and Town contributions
- Confirm sales plan / release schedule

Thank you

CONTACT

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Robert Betts

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Kyle French

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