

MEETING OF THE SAN DIEGO METROPOLITAN TRANSIT SYSTEM  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
1255 Imperial Avenue, Suite 1000  
San Diego, CA 92101

MINUTES

March 11, 2021

[Clerk's note: Except where noted, public, staff and board member comments are paraphrased. Note that the meeting was conducted via webinar to comply with public health orders].

1. Roll Call

Chair Fletcher called the Board meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. A roll call sheet listing Board member attendance is attached.

2. Approval of Minutes

Chair Fletcher moved to approve the minutes of the February 11, 2021, MTS Board of Directors meeting. Board Member Salas seconded the motion, and the vote was 12 to 0 in favor with Board Member Aguirre, Board Member Moreno, and Board Member Sandke absent.

3. Public Comment

There were no Public Comments.

CONSENT ITEMS

6. El Cajon Third Track Special Trackwork Materials – Contract Award

Action would authorize the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to execute MTS Doc. No. L1569.0-21, with Voestalpine Railway Systems Nortrak, Inc., ("Voestalpine"), for the one-time supply of special trackwork materials, in the amount of \$503,871.33, effective April 1, 2021.

7. Blue Line Right Of Way Fence Improvements – Construction Change Orders (CCO)

Action would authorize the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to execute CCO MTSJOC275-13.01 under Job Order Contract (JOC) Work Order MTS Doc. No. PWG275.0-19 with ABC Construction Co., Inc. (ABC), in the amount of \$166,984.80 for the replacement of additional chain link fencing along the Blue Line right-of-way.

8. Superloop Paver Replacement – Work Order Agreement

Action would authorize the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to execute Work Order MTSJOC275-18 under Job Order Contract (JOC) MTS Doc. No. PWG275.0-19 with ABC Construction Co., Inc. (ABC), in the amount of \$168,500.75 for the replacement of damaged pavers with concrete along the SuperLoop route.

9. Rail Welding Services – Contract Award

Action would authorize the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to execute MTS Doc. No. PWL323.0-21, with Railworks Track Services, Inc., for rail welding services, for five (5) years effective May 1, 2021, in the amount of \$277,171.27.

10. Fare Collection Change Orders – Contract Amendment

Action would authorize the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to execute Amendment No. 6 to MTS Doc. No. G2091.0-18, with Innovations in Transportation, Inc. (INIT), for a total contract increase of \$765,271.76.

11. Building C Security Restroom & Locker Room Rehabilitation –Work Order Agreement  
Action would authorize the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to execute Work Order MTSJOC324-01 under Job Order Contract (JOC) to MTS Doc. No. PWG324.0-21 (in substantially the same format as Attachment A) with ABC Construction Co., Inc. (ABC), in the amount of \$349,714.14, for rehabilitating the MTS Security restrooms and locker rooms in Building C.
12. Engine Transmission Overhaul & Cummins Parts – Contract Award  
Action would authorize the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to execute MTS Doc. Nos. B0719.0-21 to Harbor Diesel and Equipment (Group I), B0727.0-21 to Cummins, Inc. (Group II), and B0728.0-21 to Cummins, Inc., B0729.0-21 to Aftermarket Parts, and B0730.0-21 to Muncie Transit Supply (Group III) for Engine Transmission Overhaul and Cummins Parts for five (5) years for a total amount of \$12,458,722.24.
13. Crosstie and Grade Crossing Improvements – Contract Award  
Action would authorize the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to execute MTS Doc. No. PWL325.0-21, with Veterans Engineering Services, Inc., a Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise (DVBE), for Crosstie and Grade Crossing Improvements in the amount of \$2,358,317.36 plus 20% contingency.
14. Transit Vehicle Wrap Production and Installation Services – Contract Award  
Action would authorize the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to execute MTS Doc. No. G2437.0-21, with Turbo Images, for the provision of Transit Vehicle Wrap Production and Installation Services for a three (3)-year period in the amount of \$200,627.83.
15. Application for Volkswagen (VW) Environmental Mitigation Trust (Trust) Fund Bus Replacement Program  
Action approve Resolution No. 20-2, authorizing the application for rebates of up to \$720,000 in VW Trust funds for the current and future purchase of battery electric buses.
16. Property Insurance Renewal  
Action would authorize the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to renew the property insurance coverage for the San Diego Metropolitan Transit System (MTS), San Diego Transit Corporation (SDTC), and San Diego Trolley, Inc. (SDTI) with the Public Risk Innovation, Solutions, and Management (PRISM) [formerly known as the California State Association of Counties – Excess Insurance Authority (CSAC-EIA)] Property Insurance Program, effective March 31, 2021, through March 31, 2022, with various coverage deductibles of \$25,000 (real estate and personal contents property), \$100,000 (bus fleet), \$250,000 (light rail fleet) and \$1,500,000 (roads, bridges and tunnels).
17. Declaration of Surplus Property Site  
Action would declare the property located at 5801 and 5805 Fairmount Avenue, San Diego, California as “surplus land” for purposes of Government Code sections 54220, et seq.

Action on Recommended Consent Items

Board Member Gastil moved to approve Consent Agenda Item Nos. 6 to 17. Board Member Galvez seconded the motion, and the vote was 13 to 0 in favor with Board Member Aguirre and Board Member Sandke absent.

## NOTICED PUBLIC HEARING

### 25. Trolley Extension Major Service Changes Public Hearing (Denis Desmond)

Denis Desmond, MTS Director of Planning, presented on the trolley extension major service changes. He discussed the differences including: the trolley extension stations, planning, public engagement takeaways, objectives to meet expectations, specific conditions to consider, new network proposals, proposed routes 8, 9, 27, 30, new routes 43, 44, 105, new route 140, Rapid 201/202, new route 985, proposal discontinued 50 and 150 routes, bus network changes, frequencies, Title VI, and next steps.

#### PUBLIC COMMENTS

*Miguel Aguirre* – Representing Grand Central West made a verbal statement to the Board during the meeting. Aguirre supported border policy for the binational region.

#### BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Board Member Gastil asked what the connectivity between North County Transit District (NCTD) and the Blue Line will be for riders. Mr. Desmond explained the two major connections, noting one of them as the UTC mall, which connects to the Coaster using route 179. The second route is NCTD bus route 101. MTS projects this route to continue normal service with NCTD.

Vice Chair Sotelo-Solis asked if the Mid-Coast trolley would be a seamless substitute for the 150 bus route elimination. Mr. Desmond confirmed the travel times of route 150 are more unreliable due to varying traffic patterns. He noted the trolley would offer more accurate time dependency.

Vice Chair Sotelo-Solis asked staff about funding sources to replenish the \$1 million deficit that would fund nighttime service along the Blue Line. Sharon Cooney, MTS Chief Executive Officer, clarified the staff recommendation includes a funding allocation from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act and American Rescue Plan (ARP). Vice Chair Sotelo-Solis replied that financial budgetary commitments to services show a commitment to the community south of the downtown region. She emphasized leveraging resources in the long-term.

Board Member Sandke highlighted bus routes 8, 9 and 140 support both work and tourist destinations. He acknowledged the lack of infrastructure at the border Blue Line station. He asked about route 44 reconfiguration and whether there are alternate routes that could support the connection between Clairemont Square and Clairemont Mesa Blvd. Mr. Desmond clarified route 43 would substitute route 44 service with no change to frequency.

#### PUBLIC COMMENTS

*Dan Allen* – Representing La Jolla Community Planning Association provided a verbal statement to the Board during the meeting. Allen expressed hope to have a shuttle bus connection between La Jolla Village and the nearest trolley station.

*Nicole Burgess* – Representing Bike Walk SD made a verbal statement to the Board during the meeting. Burgess asked how MTS defines nighttime services. Burgess highlighted the importance of the Blue Line service.

#### BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Chair Fletcher asked about the frequency of the Mid-Coast extension. Mr. Desmond responded north of downtown would offer 15-minute frequency 7 days per week with a 30-minute frequency beginning at 9pm. In the southern portion of downtown and beyond, the line will operate every 7.5 minutes on weekdays and 15 minutes on weekends.

Chair Fletcher asked if the bus service would be aligned with the trolley service. Mr. Desmond responded the 15-minute trolley service would coincide with 15-minute bus intervals.

#### Action Taken

Chair Fletcher noted that there would be no action taken. This item will be presented and voted on by the Board at the April 8<sup>th</sup>, 2021 meeting.

#### DISCUSSION ITEMS

30. Recommended Changes to the Regional Comprehensive Fare Ordinance (Rob Schupp)

Chair Fletcher commented that during the Executive Committee meeting, the proposed recommendation was reviewed and approved by the Committee. He listed the changes which included free transfers, reductions to youth fares, PRONTO engagement strategies, along with fare functionality with a fare increase. He noted the Committee did not want to approve a fare increase until 2025 in order to allow the system to self-stabilize and use a portion of the federal relief to bridge financial instability. Chair Fletcher recommended to the Board to remove the option to increase the adult one-way fare and revisit this option once the system stabilizes in the future.

Rob Schupp, MTS Director of Marketing and Communications, presented on the recommended changes to the regional comprehensive fare ordinance including: operations, rider benefits, background, transfer history, peer agency analysis, free transfers with one-way ticket analysis, free transfer revenue analysis/impacts, one-way ridership, and the proposed recommendation.

Chair Fletcher noted that he would propose removing the final recommendation in the staff presentation, which would seek approval of increasing adult one-way fares in 2025.

#### PUBLIC COMMENTS

*David Grubb* – Representing Sierra Club San Diego made a verbal statement to the Board during the meeting. Grubb stated their support for the staff recommendation with Chair Fletcher's recommendation incorporated.

*Jesse O'Sullivan* – Representing Circulate San Diego made a verbal statement to the Board during the meeting. O'Sullivan expressed their support for the agenda recommendation. O'Sullivan noted particular support for no cost transfers on the system.

*Shelah Ott* – Representing Hammond Climate Solutions made a verbal statement to the Board during the meeting. Ott opposed the fare increase and expressed support for staff's recommendation. Ott noted particular support to reduce youth fares and add no cost transfers to the system.

*Cris Sotomayor* – Representing Mid-City CAN made a verbal statement to the Board during the meeting. Sotomayor expressed their support for reduced youth fares and no cost transfers.

*Carolina Martinez* – Representing Environmental Health Coalition made a verbal statement to the Board during the meeting. Martinez noted particular support for reduced youth fares, no cost transfers, a transition to the PRONTO system and the suspension of fare increases.

*Stephanie Hernandez* – Representing City Heights Community Development Corporation on behalf of the San Diego Transportation Equity Working Group made a verbal statement to the Board during the meeting. Hernandez noted support for a transition to the PRONTO system, reduced youth fares, fare capping, no cost transfers, and the suspension of fare increases. Hernandez urged the Board to support the SANDAG Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) no cost fare scenarios for youth 24 years and younger.

*Bertha Rodriguez* – Representing San Diego Green New Deal Alliance made a verbal statement to the Board during the meeting. Rodriguez expressed support for staff's recommendation and voiced support for no cost fares for youth and free transfers. Rodriguez also opposed fare increases.

*Judy Thomas* – Representing The Boulevard made a verbal statement to the Board during the meeting. Thomas expressed support for reduced youth fares.

*Keara Piña* – Representing Center on Policy Initiatives made a verbal statement to the Board during the meeting. Piña opposed the potential fare increases and supported fare capping, reduced youth fares and no cost transfers. Piña urged the Board to support the SANDAG RTP, no cost fare scenarios for youth 24 years and younger.

*Colin Parent* – Representing Circulate San Diego made a verbal statement to the Board during the meeting. Parent expressed support for reduced youth fares and free transfers. Parent thanked staff for the fare capping initiatives.

*Maria Cortez* – Representing City Heights Development Corporation and Mid-City CAN made a verbal statement to the Board during the meeting. Cortez expressed support for reduced youth fares, the PRONTO system, and the suspension of fare increases.

*Lori Kearns* – Made a verbal statement to the Board during the meeting. Kearns supported the free transfers recommendation. Kearns expressed concerns about reduced senior fares not being available on the PRONTO system. Kearns expressed difficulty with the trolley to route 33 transfer.

*Noah Harris* – Representing Climate Action Campaign made a verbal statement to the Board during the meeting. Harris noted particular support for reduced youth fares, no cost transfers, fare capping and the suspension of fare increases. Harris urged the Board to support the SANDAG RTP, no cost fare scenarios for youth 24 years and younger.

*Michael Horgan* – Made a verbal statement to the Board during the meeting. Horgan expressed support for staff's recommendation. Horgan urged the Board to only increase fares as a last resort.

*Yasmeen Obeid* – Representing Mid-City CAN made a verbal statement to the Board during the meeting. Obeid expressed support for the suspension of fare increases, free transfers and reduced youth fares. Obeid urged the Board to support the SANDAG RTP, no cost fare scenarios for youth 24 years and younger.

*Nicole Burgess* – Made a verbal statement to the Board during the meeting. Burgess expressed support for the staff recommendation including the suspension of fare increases.

*Alejandra Fen* – Representing Environmental Health Coalition made a verbal statement to the Board on behalf of Maritza Garcia during the meeting. Fen expressed support for reduced youth fares and no cost transfers.

*Michelle Krug* – Made a verbal statement to the Board during the meeting. Krug was concerned about seniors being able to access the PRONTO card, especially with a 30-day transition period. Krug urged the Board to extend the transition period to 90 days as there are digital equity obstacles in the senior community. Krug also asked to keep route 30 in service and asked for the Blue Line service hours to be extended.

#### BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Board Member Sandke supported the motion with the removal of language to increase adult one-way fares in 2025. He acknowledged and thanked the public speakers for their comments.

Board Member Goble asked if there was a financial incentive for riders to purchase a monthly pass. Ms. Cooney responded that the monthly pass is an option for frequent riders and institutions who buy them for their constituents.

Board Member Goble asked about the pre-COVID rider estimate after PRONTO is launched. He asked if the funding shortfalls would be used from the CARES Act funding. Ms. Cooney clarified the CARES funding would be used to subsidize revenue shortfalls.

Board Member Goble asked if the CARES Act funds had an expiration. Ms. Cooney clarified that the CARES Act funds have no expiration date; however, the new American Rescue Plan (ARP) funds do have an expiration date. Board Member Goble was in support of using federal relief to fund no-cost transfers, along with the suspension of fare increases at this time.

Board Member Whitburn asked about the PRONTO card and the functionality with free transfers. He was concerned fare capping on the PRONTO system was only available through the application and was concerned about digital equity obstacles for the senior, disabled and unsheltered community. He asked for solutions to this potential complication. Mr. Schupp replied that a physical card would be easily obtainable through the retail network, which has approximately 400 partners. The retail partners will both distribute and reload the cards. MTS will also be partnering with social service agencies to assist with accessibility efforts.

Chair Fletcher noted the Executive Committee proposed that MTS increase partnerships with Community Based Organizations (CBOs) for formalized and funded outreach.

Board Member Moreno was concerned the staff report emphasized the revenue impact more than an impact to ridership. She clarified her support for this item would be to promote the increases to ridership. She urged the Board to consider ridership over revenue and advised to push ridership to pre-pandemic levels utilizing CARES and ARP funding.

Board Member Montgomery Steppe supported the motion and agreed with Board Member Moreno's comments.

Board Member Elo-Rivera highlighted the impacts fare changes would have on the community and noted any deviations would have social equity and environmental justice impacts. He urged

the Board to consider community remarks for direction on this issue. He supported youth fare decreases and no-cost transfers. He urged the Board to think of reduced youth fares beyond an immediate revenue marker and rather an investment on future riders.

Board Member Gastil noted the Board may have to increase fares if there are not alternative funding sources available. He proposed a long-term strategy to eliminate charging fares on the system should be considered.

Vice Chair Sotelo-Solis reinforced previous comments made by the Board and the staff recommendation. She also supported formalized support from CBOs to conduct outreach.

Action Taken

Chair Fletcher moved to forward a recommendation to SANDAG to make the following changes to the Regional Comprehensive Fare Ordinance: 1) Adopt “best fare” functionality; 2) Reduce Youth one-way fares from \$2.50 to \$1.25; 3) Allow free transfers for one-way fares within two hours of the first boarding; 4) Request a PRONTO account to access free transfers with one-way fares; and 5) Fund revenue shortfalls through FY 2024 with CARES Act and ARP funds through 2024. Board Member Elo-Rivera seconded the motion, and the vote was 15 to 0 in favor.

REPORT ITEMS

45. Zero Emission Bus (ZEB) Pilot Performance and Transition Plan Update (Mike Wygant and Kyle Whatley)

The Board deferred the staff report for this item.

OTHER ITEMS

60. Chair Report

There was no Chair’s Report.

61. Chief Executive Officer’s Report

There was no Chief Executive Officer’s Report.

62. Board Member Communications

There were no Board Member communications.

63. Additional Public Comments on Items Not on the Agenda

There were no additional public comments.

64. Next Meeting Date

The next regularly scheduled Board meeting is April 8, 2021.

CLOSED SESSION (ITEMS TAKEN OUT OF ORDER)

24. Closed Session Items

The Board convened to Closed Session at 11:00 a.m.

- a. CLOSED SESSION – CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL – EXISTING LITIGATION  
Pursuant to California Government Code Section 54956.9(d)(2) (Government Tort Claim  
from Claudia Isabel Hernandez for herself and as successor in interest to the Estate of  
Angel Zapata Hernandez)

The Board reconvened to Open Session at 12:33 p.m.

Oral Report of Final Actions Taken in Closed Session

Karen Landers, General Counsel, reported the following:

- a. The Board received a report and gave instructions to legal counsel.

65. Adjournment

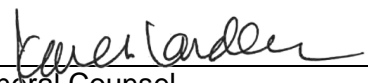
The meeting was adjourned at 12:37 p.m.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairperson  
San Diego Metropolitan Transit System

Filed by:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Clerk of the Board  
San Diego Metropolitan Transit System

Approved as to form:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
General Counsel  
San Diego Metropolitan Transit System

Attachment: Roll Call Sheet



SAN DIEGO METROPOLITAN TRANSIT SYSTEM  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
ROLL CALL

MEETING OF (DATE):	<u>March 11, 2021</u>	CALL TO ORDER (TIME):	<u>9:00 am</u>
RECESS:		RECONVENE:	
CLOSED SESSION:	<u>11:00 am</u>	RECONVENE:	<u>12:33 pm</u>
PUBLIC HEARING:	<u>09:03 am</u>	RECONVENE:	<u>09:53 pm</u>
ORDINANCES ADOPTED:		ADJOURN:	<u>12:37 pm</u>

BOARD MEMBER		(Alternate)		PRESENT (TIME ARRIVED)	ABSENT (TIME LEFT)
FLETCHER	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	(Vargas)	<input type="checkbox"/>	9:00 am	12:33 pm
SOTELO-SOLIS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	(Bush)	<input type="checkbox"/>	9:00 am	12:33 pm
AGUIRRE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	(Leyba-Gonzalez)	<input type="checkbox"/>	9:06 am	12:33 pm
ELO-RIVERA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	(LaCava)	<input type="checkbox"/>	9:00 am	12:33 pm
FRANK	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	(Mullin)	<input type="checkbox"/>	9:00 am	12:33 pm
GALVEZ	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	(Cardenas)	<input type="checkbox"/>	9:01 am	12:33 pm
GASTIL	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	(Mendoza)	<input type="checkbox"/>	9:00 am	12:33 pm
GLORIA	<input type="checkbox"/>	(Whitburn)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	9:00 am	12:33 pm
GOBLE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	(Ortiz)	<input type="checkbox"/>	9:00 am	12:33 pm
HALL	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	(McNelis)	<input type="checkbox"/>	9:00 am	12:33 pm
MONTGOMERY STEPPE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	(Von Wilpert)	<input type="checkbox"/>	9:00 am	12:33 pm
MORENO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	(Campillo)	<input type="checkbox"/>	9:02 am	12:33 pm
SALAS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	(Cardenas)	<input type="checkbox"/>	9:00 am	12:33 pm
SANDKE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	(Bailey)	<input type="checkbox"/>	9:04 am	12:33 pm
WEBER	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	(Arapostathis)	<input type="checkbox"/>	9:00 am	12:00 pm

SIGNED BY THE CLERK OF THE BOARD:



CONFIRMED BY THE GENERAL COUNSEL:

