



**Yosemite Area Regional Transportation System (YARTS)
Authority Advisory Committee
MINUTES
REVISED**

DATE
Wednesday, April 7, 2021

The regular meeting of the Yosemite Area Regional Transportation System (YARTS) Authority Advisory Committee (AAC) was held Wednesday, April 7, 2021 via teleconference/videoconference and was called to order by Chair O'Donel-Browne at 1:35 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Candy O'Donel-Browne, Mariposa County Economic Development Corp., Chair
Karen Baker, Merced Regional Airport, Vice Chair
Jim Donovan, Yosemite National Park
Tom Dumas for Hilda Sousa, Caltrans, District 10
Sandy Hogan, Private Citizen, Mono County*
Dana Hallett, Private Citizen, Mariposa County
Lisa Mayo, Tuolumne County Visitors Bureau
Matthew McClain, Private Citizen, Mono County
Jeff Simpson, Mono County Economic Development
Nanette Villegas, Merced Mall

MEMBERS ABSENT

Jonathan Farrington, Yosemite/Mariposa County Tourism Bureau
Moses Stites, Fresno Rural Transit
Terri Peresan, Mariposa County Department of Community Services

OTHERS PRESENT

Peggy Arnest, Fresno Council of Governments
Denise Demery, VIA Adventures
Gordon Shaw, LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc.

STAFF PRESENT

Christine Chavez, Transit Manager
Kate Molthen, Assistant Transit Manager
Skyler Summers, Assistant Transit Manager
Xavier Garcia, Transit Administrative Assistant
Stacie Guzman, Executive Director
Nav Bagri, Finance Director
Eva Garibay, Public Programs Specialist II
Adam Perez, Multimedia Specialist

*Arrived after roll call

1. Roll Call

Chair O'Donel-Browne led the introductions and called the meeting to order at 1:35 p.m. An announcement was made to inform the AAC that Steve Smallcombe resigned from the committee.

2. Public Comment

None.

3. National Park Service Report

Jim Donovan reported that a new restroom facility and will be constructed at Bridalveil Falls, which may cause 15 minute delays. The contractor has until September 30 to finish the project, but it is expected to be completed before then. Work will be done along Tioga Road when it opens to address off-road parking as stated in the Tuolumne River Plan. Delays up to 15 minutes are expected there. PG&E will be replacing power lines on El Portal Road that may cause 15 minute delays. The Yosemite Village parking area is being expanded to add 165 new parking spaces. That work is expected to be completed by Memorial Day weekend. Lastly, the Park is undertaking a Federal Highway Administration funded pilot project to conduct traffic studies and models in Yosemite Valley to assess how changes to the traffic circulation system can help with congestion.

4. Minutes of the February 3, 2021 YARTS Authority Advisory Committee regular meeting

No questions.

Jeff Simpson moved to approve the minutes from the February 3, 2021 YARTS Authority Advisory Committee regular meeting.
Seconded by Matthew McClain.

Ayes – Members Baker, Donovan, Dumas, Hogan, Mayo, McClain, O'Donel-Browne, Simpson, Villegas

Noes – None

Absent – Members Farrington, Hallet, Peresan, Stites

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

5. Information/Discussion Only

a. Service Update, Ridership History and Customer Service Reports for December 2020 – February 2021

Tom Dumas asked if the Park is requiring reservations for YARTS passengers.

Kate Molthen replied that passengers who ride YARTS into the Park are not required to have reservations.

b. YARTS Quarterly Marketing and Media Update

Matthew McClain commented that staff should post on social media the measures YARTS is taking to ensure passenger safety to assure potential riders that riding the bus is safe.

c. YARTS/Mariposa County Annual Agreement for Services – Fiscal Year 2021-22

Chair O'Donel-Browne noted that Marshall Long has replaced Kevin Cann as the Chair of the Mariposa County Board of Supervisors.

- d. **YARTS/Fresno Council of Governments Agreement – Fiscal Year 2021-22 Amendment No. 4 and associated Budget for Highway 41 services**

No questions.

- e. **YARTS/Amtrak Thruway Bus Agreement Contract Extension No. 2 – Fiscal Year 2021-22**

No questions.

- f. **YARTS/Department of the Interior/National Park Service Cooperative Agreement Modification No. 001 – Fiscal Year 2021-22**

No questions.

6. **YARTS/Merced County Association of Governments Agreement for Services – Fiscal Year 2021-22**

No questions.

Sandy Hogan moved to recommend the YARTS Joint Powers Authority authorize the Chair to sign the Agreement for Services between the Yosemite Area Regional Transportation System and the Merced County Association of Governments for a period of one year commencing on July 1, 2021 and terminating on June 30, 2022.

Seconded by Jeff Simpson.

Ayes – Members Baker, Donovan, Dumas, Hallett, Hogan, Mayo, McClain, O'Donel-Browne, Simpson, Villegas

Noes – None

Absent – Members Farrington, Peresan, Stites

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

7. **YARTS/VIA Adventures, Inc. Contract Extension No. 2**

No questions.

8. **Meeting Schedule for the YARTS Authority Advisory Committee for Fiscal Year 2021-22**

Christine Chavez noted that the January meeting was moved to February to accommodate agenda development over the holidays.

No questions.

9. **Election of Officers for the YARTS Authority Advisory Committee for Fiscal Year 2021-22**

Sandy Hogan moved to nominate Karen Baker to serve as Chair of the YARTS AAC for Fiscal Year 2021-22. Seconded by Matthew McClain.

Ayes – Members Baker, Donovan, Dumas, Hallett, Hogan, Mayo, McClain, O'Donel-Browne, Simpson, Villegas

Noes – None

Absent – Members Farrington, Peresan, Stites

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Chair O'Donel-Browne nominated Sandy Hogan to serve as Vice Chair of the YARTS AAC for Fiscal Year 2021-22.

Seconded by Matthew McClain.

Ayes – Members Baker, Donovan, Dumas, Hallett, Hogan, Mayo, McClain, O'Donel-Browne, Simpson, Villegas

Noes – None

Absent – Members Farrington, Peresan, Stites

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

10. Low Carbon Transit Operations Program Fiscal Year 2020-21

Matthew McClain suggested that staff develop talking points that detail why diesel buses will be purchased instead of electric buses; those points should be distributed to all member counties so everyone is on the same page.

Matthew McClain moved to recommend the YARTS Joint Powers Authority:

- a. Adopt resolution No. 2021/04-12-01 authorizing the allocation request submittal for the purchase and replacement of six (6) 45' over-the-road motorcoach buses; and
- b. Authorize the Yosemite Area Regional Transportation System Executive Director as an Authorized Agent to sign and execute related grant documents, including the Certifications and Assurances.

Seconded by Jeff Simpson.

Ayes – Members Baker, Donovan, Dumas, Hallett, Hogan, Mayo, McClain, O'Donel-Browne, Simpson, Villegas

Noes – None

Absent – Members Farrington, Peresan, Stites

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

11. Fiscal Year 2020-21 Caltrans 5311(f) Program Funding and Public Hearing

No questions.

Sandy Hogan moved to recommend the YARTS Joint Powers Authority:

- a. Hold a public hearing to allow for public comments on the application for funds from the Caltrans 5311(f) grant program for fiscal year 2020-21; and
- b. Adopt Resolution No. 2021/04-12-02 authorizing funding under FTA Section 5311 (49 U.S.C. Section 5311) with the California Department of Transportation for operating assistance.

Seconded by Nanette Villegas.

Ayes – Members Baker, Donovan, Dumas, Hallett, Hogan, Mayo, McClain, O'Donel-Browne, Simpson, Villegas

Noes – None

Absent – Members Farrington, Peresan, Stites

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

12. YARTS Financial Report/Budget Update for July 2020 – February 2021

No questions.

13. YARTS Fiscal Year 2019-20 Audit

No questions.

Jeff Simpson moved to recommend the YARTS Joint Powers Authority accept the Yosemite Area Regional Transportation System Financial Statements and Independent Auditor's Report for the year ending June 30, 2020.

Seconded by Karen Baker.

Ayes – Members Baker, Donovan, Dumas, Hallett, Hogan, Mayo, McClain, O'Donel-Browne, Simpson, Villegas

Noes – None

Absent – Members Farrington, Peresan, Stites

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

14. YARTS Budget Amendment No. 1

No questions.

Dana Hallet moved to recommend the YARTS Joint Powers Authority:

- a. Amend the FY 2020-21 budget to incorporate \$664,993 of CARES Act funding and offset local funding by moving to the YARTS capital reserve fund; and
- b. Amend the FY 2020-21 capital budget to increase the capital revenues by \$9,219 using the capital reserve fund. The amendment would shift funds from the operations budget to the capital expenditure budget in the amount of \$38,781.

Seconded by Nanette Villegas.

Ayes – Members Baker, Donovan, Dumas, Hallett, Hogan, Mayo, McClain, O'Donel-Browne, Simpson, Villegas

Noes – None

Absent – Members Farrington, Peresan, Stites

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

15. Review and Adopt the YARTS Operating and Capital Budget Fiscal Year 2021-22

Christine Chavez and Nav Bagri gave a PowerPoint presentation on the budget that included achievements, service modifications and financial challenges during fiscal year 2020-21.

No questions.

Lisa Mayo moved to recommend the YARTS Joint Powers Authority:

- a. Hold a public hearing to allow for public comments on the proposed budget for fiscal year 2021-22; and
- b. Approve the proposed YARTS budget for the fiscal year 2021-22.

Seconded by Dana Hallett.

Ayes – Members Baker, Donovan, Dumas, Hallett, Hogan, Mayo, McClain, O'Donel-Browne, Simpson, Villegas

Noes – None

Absent – Members Farrington, Peresan, Stites

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

16. YARTS Strategic Plan – Preliminary Recommendation of White Paper

Christine Chavez introduced Gordon Shaw to begin the discussion.

Gordon Shaw gave a PowerPoint presentation on the preliminary recommendations made in the Strategic Plan White Paper.

Chair O'Donel-Browne mentioned that YARTS owns an unused property in Midpines that was not turned into a stop because the buses could not fit and asked about the possibility of selling that property to purchase buses.

Tom Dumas clarified that the property went unused because of clearance issues after residents would not allow trees to be cut down.

Christine Chavez stated staff will look into the details of the property in question.

Sandy Hogan asked if the start date for the Highway 395/120 route would be June 1 or June 15 if the route is shortened to end on September 15.

Gordon Shaw replied that the start date is variable as it depends on the opening of Tioga Road.

Jim Donovan asked to consider having all the routes stop at Curry Village instead of just Highway 140.

Gordon Shaw replied that shortening of the routes opens the possibility of stopping at Curry Village.

17. AAC Recommended YARTS Funding Opportunities

No questions.

18. Ferguson Rock Shed Update

No questions.

19. Transit Manager Update

Christine Chavez reported that staff has started discussions with Madera County to help fund the Highway 41 corridor in the 2023 summer season and beyond. Jim Donovan has also contacted the National Park Service about potential funding for the Highway 41 corridor. Ms. Chavez also reported that a federal earmark request from the Merced County Association of Governments was made to Congressman Jim Costa for federal funding to cover the cost of fleet replacements for YARTS.

20. Member Remarks

Dana Hallet expressed concern about the seemingly random stops made in Midpines and suggested making those stops more consistent. Ms. Hallett also recommended target marketing in Midpines to encourage more ridership.

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS OF THE YARTS AUTHORITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE, THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 3:43 P.M.