

City of **SANTA CLARITA**  **TRANSIT**

ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Minutes of the Committee Meeting

9:00 a.m.
Thursday, November 7, 2019

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman, John Panico called to order the meeting of the Accessibility Advisory Committee at 9:00AM.

MEMBERS & GENERAL PUBLIC PRESENT

John Panico, Chairman

Lillian Shaw, Member

Keith Curry, Vice Chair

Anthony Santiago, Access Services

John Taylor, Santa Clarita Senior Center

Keith Mbulo, MV Transportation

Karen Taylor, Santa Clarita Senior Center

Arcy Torres, MV Transportation

James Hogan, Member

Larry Miranda, MV Transportation

Adrian Aguilar, City of Santa Clarita

Carmen Taylor, General Public

George Orentlicher, General Public

Linda Wood, Member

Karen Manke, Member

Line Paquin, member

Ella Clark, Member

Georgiana Meneou, General Public

Genevieve Carbone, General Public

Kurt Baldwin, Independent Living Center
of Southern California

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion to approve the agenda was approved.

The agenda was approved as is.

A motion to approve the minutes was approved.

The minutes were approved as is.

MEMBER COMMENTS

Keith Curry

No comments at the moment, I'm going to reserve my comments for later on during the agency updates and possibly bylaws.

Lillian Shaw

When I ride the transit bus, I need both of the front seats up so I can get in with the scooter, so that I can turn around and get back in, it takes maybe a minute. The other day, I got on the bus and one side was setup and I asked the driver if she wouldn't mind putting the other side up so I could turn around better and park. I got the eye roll and the deep sigh, I didn't say anything. She popped it up and I said, "You know what, I would trade one day of my life for a day of your life in a heartbeat". She turned around and walked back up to the bus seat. Just a little compassion.

Keith Mbulo

What day was it so I can address it with the operator? We have incorporated the customer service and sensitivity into our safety meeting trainings. So every other month, we are reviewing those items.

Lillian Shaw responded

It wasn't Pat, but it was the other lady with the blonde hair that wears her hair in a ponytail and I don't remember what day it was. I was on my way to a Doctor appointment, so I didn't call it in.

John Panico commented

These things should be called in immediately.

Ella Clark

Yesterday when I was picked up, we had this young man that goes to work on Whites Canyon and Soledad. He was talking about how she thought she had to pick up Whitney, and then the driver said "Never mind, I need to take you and then come back again". I asked "Why don't you pick her up on the way, because she lives right by my house?" and then she was going all the way down by me, so she called it in. It was okay, and then we picked up Whitney. What I would like to know is, "Does anyone look at these schedules beforehand?" Whitney is less than a mile away from me, the gas is expensive

and to go all the way down to Newhall and then come back to Canyon Country to take her all the way back down there where I was going, to me seems like a waste of time and energy. Someone needs to go back and look at these schedules and see if it makes sense. Some of the newer drivers are afraid to ask to make changes. I'm wondering what a dispatcher does. You could be saving a lot of time and a lot of money.

Also today, my pick up time was 8:05 AM. At 8:30, I was wondering where my bus was this morning. When I called, I was told that I was calling the wrong agency. When she found me, she told me that I was getting a Dial-A-Ride bus. I just told her to cancel my trip because I'm allergic to those buses. I got in my car and drove here. I think I was forgotten and they threw the nearest bus at me and they said the bus would be there in two minutes. I could see the entrance to the front entrance of my mobile home park and there was no bus coming.

Adrian Aguilar responded to Ella Clarks comments

Yes, we do have a dispatcher. We do have somebody who reviews the schedules on a daily bases. The challenge that we have is, as you know and this morning was a perfect example, things are constantly changing on the route throughout the day. We have cancellations, we have no shows. That all impacts how trips are scheduled and I don't know how that route was structured. It is possible that that trip was inserted in between your pick up and the other patrons drop off on your route yesterday, I don't know, but that is not uncommon. So if that trip was cancelled, it may seem out of whack, but at one point it worked.

One of the things that we do rely on is the operators to say "Okay, this doesn't make sense, let me call it in and see if we could get a change". We expect them to do that, we rely on them to do that and I know that for our next round of meetings, I will have George Mbulo, our Safety Manager have him mention the expectation to the operators, that we need their feedback and they need to pick up the radio and let dispatch know.

In terms of this morning's trip, we will look into it and see why it was late, I don't know right now because I haven't had a chance to take a look at it, but we will when we get back into the office.

Ella Clark added to her comment

Also, when I am coming out of our Mobile Home Park, there is a park bench over to the left. There are cars coming up Sierra Highway, you can't see through the bench because of this ad that it has on the side of it. It's hard for people to turn right. They have to wait until the whole light cycle passes. If you can get rid of that ad, it would be nice because it is obstructing the vision for the people coming out of the mobile home park. It's called "Cordova Mobile Home Park".

Adrian Aguilar responded to Ella Clark's comment

We will certainly take a look at that.

Karen Manke

Someone that I know that rides the regular bus works at Magic Mountain. She wanted to know if the regular bus can go to Magic Mountain on Saturdays and Sundays. The 501 route, is that a possibility?

Adrian Aguilar responded to Karen Manke's question

Because of the construction that is going on in that area, we did have to relocate that bus stop. I haven't received an update lately in terms of where they are with that construction. We will look into it and be sure to notify the riders in terms of what is going on with that stop location.

Karen Manke added to her comments

Last week, I was over at Ralphs and I was waiting for the bus. They were in the parking lot on their break or lunch and it made my pick-up time a half an hour later. If a driver is on their lunch or break, why can't they send another bus instead, or is it that driver that has to come and get you?

Adrian Aguilar responded

We will have to look at it.

John Taylor

On behalf of the Senior Center, Suzanne Nelson and Kevin McDonald, I'd like to thank you guys because of how fast you guys got us out of that fire situation, two weeks ago Thursday. I want to thank you very much. They came with vans and got us all out of there as fast as they could. It was very smoky that day.

Line Paquin

On Wednesday, October 9, I had cancelled my stand by that I had for 8:30 AM like a week before. Then I booked it to a different location and different time and they came at 8:30 because of the stand by time, so they left. I called at 9:00 AM and they told me I was a no-show, but I had cancelled it a week before.

On Friday, October 11, the day of the fire, I received a call/voicemail at 7:00 AM to let me know that my ride was cancelled due to the fire but it wasn't mine. I called back, I was on hold for forty minutes trying to find out if I had a ride or not. By the time I got through, they said there was a bus outside and I wasn't ready because I was on hold for

so long. They no-show me for all this stuff and it's not my fault and I'm mad. Ten years, and it's not getting any better. I think it's time for someone to make it better.

Jim Hogan

What I'm hearing here today, most of this could be resolved before you got to this meeting, if you would just read your "Rider's Guide" the rules and regulations. If I have an 8:35 pick-up, I'm not going to call till after my twenty minute window.

Linda Wood

I have a hard time going up the hill. I have to go all around, I just do it because there is no light.

Kurt Baldwin

I wanted to bring to your attention, a forum that is happening next week. It's going to be the first annual Metro accessibility forum. If you remember me talking about what came out of Measure M, was the motion from the Metro Board to do an annual accessibility report and present that at the annual accessibility forum that is going to be on the 14th from 10-2. If you want the link to sign up for it, send me an email and I can forward it to you, or if you want the link to the report, I can send that to you too. It will be at the Union Station ticket room. You can get there by Metrolink, or you can take the transfer from Access Services.

John Panico

First, please sign the sign in sheet. It started at Line and it's going down this way.

Secondly, the agenda at the bottom said the next meeting said November 7th, but it is actually January 9th.

Thirdly, I want to thank Keith and Arcy. They took their son to work day a couple months ago and I had a nice tour of the Transit Maintenance Facility on the MV side and met a lot of people. I was impressed with the maintenance area and the dispatch area and the work that they are doing there. I thank them very much for that, and hopefully I can get to the City side one day.

OLD BUSINESS

Adrian Aguilar

AAC BYLAWS

At the last meeting, we talked about the bylaws and some people still had some questions, so what we did was we set up a separate meeting that focused exclusively on the bylaws and to go through them and answer any questions.

We had set up the meeting here at City Hall for anyone that wanted to attend in person and also, we set up a conference call, so if you couldn't come in person, you could call in and join the discussion. I heard from a couple of you that you were not able to attend the meeting, but there were four of us total that went through the changes. There was not a lot of discussion since the folks that attended had already made comments. I had not heard from anyone else in terms of any additional questions that may have come up. That was one of the opportunities to review them and ask questions and make comments.

I apologize, as I was handing out the agenda, I had brought copies at the last meeting and I had copies for our meeting a couple weeks back, but I didn't bring additional copies of the bylaws with me for today's meeting. They did get emailed out to the entire group. I don't know if anyone has any additional comments, or anything else that they wanted to share about the bylaws.

Marilyn Grunwald

I just need to know how you advertise for this meeting.

Adrian Aguilar responded

It was for committee members, and we emailed everyone in the committee and left messages for Karen.

Keith Curry

I believe we dotted our eyes and crossed our t's on the bylaws and we all concurred that the bylaws were up to standard. The motion was made, seconded and opened for discussion.

Jim Hogan

Our website needs to be updated because the membership is not accurate on that list. I don't have a problem with having my name and phone number. One of the reasons we formed this committee was to get public input because that is how we make the best decisions when we know what is going on out there. We should accept the revisions or decline it.

Kurt Baldwin asked

Was there anything more substantial discussed?

Jim Hogan responded

One of the things we discussed was not part of the bylaws but we used to start from 9-11:30 AM. One of the things we came up with was stick to 9-11:00 AM, but we will have our Access pick up time changed to 11:15 AM. The timeframe was a big discussion. There was a discussion about including meeting dates and times or adding that, and we decided that – that would be best left to the discretion of the group and the chair as opposed to written in the bylaws themselves.

Adrian Aguilar added

There were no new discussions other than what Jim mentioned.

Kurt Baldwin asked

I think that is a good idea. So still to become a member, you fill out the application and it gets submitted to the City Manager?

Adrian Aguilar responded

The process to become a part of the committee is you would submit a letter of interest, assuming that there is an opening. We would invite folks to submit an application or letter of interest that would go to the Deputy City Manager, through me, and then what I would do is share it with them. We would review that request, the qualifications of the candidate that is interested, and that appointment is made by the Deputy City Manager.

Jim Hogan added to Adrian Aguilar's comments

If I may say, we did change some of the wording in there. We did create eleven positions, which we have always had. We eliminated the number of disabled so we get better attendance.

Kurt Baldwin asked

What about Hart District?

Adrian responded to Kurt Baldwin

Yes, the Hart District is still a member.

Jim Hogan responded to Kurt Baldwin

If we have a vacancy, I changed that a little bit. The vacancy does not count since we never had eleven positions filled. We had around nine.

I want to thank everybody who helped out. Thank you for your support, and Adrian who did a lot of work behind the scenes to help me out. Let's make a motion to accept the bylaws.

Keith Curry

There is a motion pending. I made the motion.

John Taylor

I will second the motion.

John Panico

All in favor – Aye

It's passed unanimous. The bylaws are effective as of November 7, 2019.

NEW BUSINESS

John Panico

We just approved the meeting schedule for 2020, Adrian handed it out. January 9, 2020 will be our next meeting here in the Century room and we do the main meeting at the Transit Maintenance Facility, and our six meetings are set.

Jim Hogan asked Adrian Aguilar

Adrian, I noticed you posted on the web-site the Agenda and the Minutes from the previous meeting, would you mind adding the bylaws?

Adrian responded

Yes, absolutely.

Jim Hogan asked

For those of you who are members, do you have any objection to list your phone numbers on the City's website? Linda?

Linda responded, I don't mind.

Jim Hogan responded

How about the Chair and the Vice Chair?

Keith Curry added

This is considered part of the City and Adrian, they have their number listed but it is not their personal numbers, it's their business numbers. We will be asked to give our personal telephone numbers which I am not in agreement with. However, I will yield over to my email address, but not my personal telephone number. I will authorize that to be listed on the website.

Kurt Baldwin added

I agree with that unless MV or the City would have some phone number that could be forwarded to our personal numbers, voicemail or something.

Jim Hogan asked

Adrian, is it possible that we have a phone number that is the responsibility of the Chair to return that phone call, or do you see a need for that?

Adrian responded

I will leave the determination and need up to the Chair and Vice Chair. As far as having the technology to do that, I will have to check with our Tech Services folks. There may be a way to forward calls to a phone number, but the reality is, those calls will still be coming to your personal line or set up an e-mail address that you would have access to.

Keith Curry and John Panico agreed that email is sufficient.

Jim Hogan added

Let's table it and bring it up at the next meeting. I don't want to give out my cell phone number.

Kurt Baldwin asked

I was just curious about what the reason for this was. Is it for a member of the community who does not want to talk to the City, but wants to talk to this community member who connects to the City, is that what you are thinking here? Because if it is, you could just get a Google number and have it set up so that it sends an email to John or whoever volunteers with the message and you can decide what you want to do with it.

Keith Curry added

Kurt has a good idea. This is good food for thought. We can table it for the next meeting.

John Panico asked Kurt

Kurt, will you please provide Google number information for the January meeting in 2020?

AGENCY UPDATES

Adrian Aguilar, Santa Clarita Transit

FLEET UPDATE

We recently took delivery of some new transit buses that went into service recently. We have two new commuter buses that were delivered. We were able to get all the technology installed (camera's, AVL equipment). There were some issues that we found in terms of the vehicles themselves when they came from the factory. Those have all been repaired. The CHP is scheduled to be out next week to inspect the vehicles and that is the last step before we can go to the DMV and get them registered. We hope to have those into service in the next few weeks. Those will retire to diesel powered commuter buses that are going on thirteen years old. As of last year, all new commuter buses have been equipped with seatbelts and are CNG powered.

MICRO-TRANSIT SERVICE AND TRANSIT DEVELOPMENT PLAN

At the last committee meeting, I mentioned that our Transit Development Plan was going into adoption and that happened in September. That plan has been formally adopted by the City Council and we are now working on implementing those recommendations in the plan.

The first of those large recommendation that we are working on is the introduction of the Micro-Transit Service. For those of you that are not familiar, it's an on-demand service similar to Uber or Lyft. We are using software that will allow somebody to use their smart phone to request the pick-up. Our service parameter is that a vehicle will be dispatched and arrive to your location within fifteen minutes of your request and it will take you to or pick you up from any location within the designated service area.

In addition to that, it will provide service to and from key locations outside the service area such as the Metrolink Station, transfer points to make connections to local or commuter service. The fares for this service will be \$2 per trip. It will be comparable to our Dial-a-Ride. The advantage is that you now have the option to make same day trip requests. In addition to that, if you don't have a smart phone, you will have the ability to call into the call center and request/book your trip that way. We're still working on a formal name and formal branding, but we are in the planning phase of getting ready to start the implementation phase of that.

This will be a pilot program where we've received grant funding, so were planning to do a six month pilot. We will be using City vehicles and MV Operators for the service. Initially we will be using cut-a-ways for the service so they will be wheelchair accessible. We're also looking at smaller van vehicles that will also be wheelchair accessible. Depending on how things go and if things work out well, and we get the greenlight to continue the

service, that plan would then be to introduce mini vans into the fleet. But for the initial pilot, we will be using cut-a-ways.

The idea is that we are going to focus on areas that have a limited existing service. We have identified three or four areas within the Santa Clarita Valley that we know that there is some demand, but not enough demand to justify expansion of fixed route service, so those are our target areas for this service. The first pilot will include the Fair Oaks area, the area on other side of the Golden Valley area of that bridge area, so that will be covered as part of this first pilot service area.

The service area for micro-transit does not specifically include the Metrolink station, however, that will be one of the areas outside of the service area that we will be providing service to. So you can be picked up from the service area and be taken to the Metrolink Station. You can also use your Access card.

The initial service area that we are looking at is in the Canyon Country area so roughly it's the area around Golden Valley, Jakes Way, and Via Princessa, that corridor right there. It will include the COC Canyon Country Campus, and where the new Community Center is being built. That's a rough outline of the service area that we will be starting with initially. The goal of the service is to get to a passenger within fifteen minutes, so it's a relatively confined service area with specific pick up and drop off areas.

It's open to the general public, we are shooting for March 2, 2020 for a start date. The service initially will be Monday through Friday, and depending on how things go, we can look at expanding that or adding new service areas depending on what the demand is. The hours will be from roughly 4:30 AM to approximately 10 -11:00 AM, and then from 2:00-9:00 PM, we will have a little gap in the middle. That will allow for connections to commuters and also provide service when most folks are traveling in the morning and then again in the early afternoon.

You would either call into the call center or like I said, you'd be using your smart phone application, and using your phone. It will send the request to the software, the software will dispatch the driver and then again using your phone location, that's how the driver will know where to pick you up and also where you are going.

The smart phone application is free of charge. We are having to make modifications to the software so that it works, we will be branding the service to look like a City app, and that is all happening now. Members of our staff, members of MV staff, folks of the City's Communications Department and also outside contractors are working on this. As soon as we have more information and marketing materials, we will be sure to get that out.

We received a grant to fund this, the grant amount was \$264,000, so all of that money is being allocated to the operation of the service. We have some additional funding that we are using for the marketing and outreach. We expect, depending on usage, to run a

six month pilot. Depending on how that goes, what we will do, is go back to City Management and the Council, provide them with an update and hopefully ask for the service to continue.

Kurt Baldwin asked a question

I just want to raise a caution here, and I'm not picking on Santa Clarita, I am really picking on Metro because they are doing this whole transit study where they're probably going to be reducing some of the fixed route and filling it in with micro-transit. We want to make the argument that micro-transit is an extension of the fixed route because we are worried that then they will reduce the service area of Access Services because the fixed route will no longer go into that area. If you're going to expand public transit options for public transit folks out into outline areas, we really feel that Access Services should be expanding out into those areas as well. I just don't want folks to be completely left out.

Adrian responded to Kurt Baldwin's comments

I understand that, in our case it's the opposite situation, we are using this as an opportunity to expand into areas where we don't have fixed route service right now. That's the driving point behind this type of service. We know that we have areas where we don't have service, but the demand is not there to justify running thirty minute frequency all day, so this is a way to fill in that gap.

This is one of the recommendations that was included in the Transit Development Plan.

Karen Manke asked

What is going on with the Transit stop at Walmart and Sam's Club?

Adrian Aguilar responded to the question

We are still in negotiations with the property owner who is LA Department of Water and Power, so that we can install a bus stop closer to Walmart on Golden Valley. The stop location would be near the signal where there is a cross walk. That is where we envision adding a stop. Right now as you know, it is closer to the Activity Center. So, the plan is to add a stop closer to that light and that cross walk. However, we don't own the right-of-way. The negotiations and discussions with the City of Los Angeles are going on a year and a half now, and we are hoping that we are close. The other piece of this, as I mentioned, as part of this Micro-Transit program, is that area/location will be one of the stops that we serve in addition to that area within the service for Micro-Transit. Again, we know that is a major destination or traffic generator, so that is one of the locations that we have included as a designated drop off or pick-up spot outside for that service area. We have restarted the discussions with the new owners on Carl Boyer and we continue to look at that.

In terms of the Transit Development Plan, there's a number of recommendations that were included, that we have also started to work on. One of the things that our team is working on is to start making adjustments to the routes themselves. Over the next twelve to eighteen months, we will be looking at the routes, making adjustments to the schedule, and the whole idea is to improve on-time performance. We know that we have some routes where the schedule run time is sixty minutes and it's really taking seventy. Or as we found out this week, we have some routes where it's scheduled to take sixty and it's taking fifty. So what we will be doing over the next eighteen months, is to look at those routes and schedules in detail, making adjustments and tying them to our normal January and July service changes that we do. The idea is to make those tweaks and help improve on-time performance.

Right now, we do not have transfers, but we are looking at that. One of the recommendations in the Transit Development Plan was to update our fare policy to include transfers. In terms of changes to the fare structure, the addition of transfers both within the local, commuters, and outside agencies and how those transfers would work. Access ID would be accepted. We don't expect that to roll it out until mid to late 2020. As part of that, we will have to do some detailed analysis and have public hearings. I will be coming back to this group and soliciting input.

FAREBOX UPGRADE PROGRAM

As I mentioned before, we are in the process of updating our entire farebox system, this also includes the technology on the back end so that in the future, folks will be able to use their phone or their TAP card, or other various sources to pay for their fare. Initially, we planned for a December implementation, now that has been pushed out to March of next year. The contractor has run into some challenges in terms of the programming for the software, but we are now scheduled for a March implementation. From the user's perspective, it won't impact how someone pays their fares. They will still be able to use their punch tickets, subsidized fares or their TAP card or in the case of Access, their coupons. We will continue to accept those. It will just improve the security on the administrative side in terms of fare collections, and create additional payment options for folks such as Google Pay or Apple Pay.

The one thing that we don't have plans to do is to accept credit cards on the buses. However with this new technology, you will be able to tie a credit card to your TAP card in real time so we're hoping that that will address that need or that concern. We just don't want to deal with credit card and credit card information at the bus level, so this new technology will allow us to still accept credit cards without directly accepting them.

BUS STOP IMPROVEMENTS

December 10th, we will be going to Council to award a contract for the next phase of our bus stop improvements. We have identified approximately thirty stops within the

network that we will be upgrading. The upgrades for this phase of this project will be to replace old or damaged or worn amenities like benches, shelters, but the other focus of this project will be to improve security. We will be adding additional lighting at a lot of these locations, so where they are a little bit dark or may not have enough lighting, we will be adding additional lighting.

NEW DIAL-A-RIDE AND ACCESS OPERATIONS MANAGER

One last thing that I wanted to do was introduce Larry. Larry is our new Dial-A-Ride and Access Operations Manager. Larry started on Monday, but he certainly is not new to Santa Clarita. He was here in Santa Clarita as a Supervisor a little while ago, he promoted within the organization and was most recently working at Thousand Oaks. He has come back and has accepted the position. So you'll see a lot more of Larry and you'll be talking to him a lot more as well.

Keith Curry made a request to Adrian Aguilar

I have a lot of requests from the new Senior Center. Maybe you can work with Access. Maybe you guys can come do a one hour seminar at the new Senior Center because they really need this information and they are behind right now, they haven't had one in months, if not a year. Maybe you guys can get over there the first of the year and touch base with Natalie Soto, extension 128. She is the health and wellness program director for that particular seminar. Contact her and maybe do a one hour seminar, maybe the first of the year and get over there for the health and wellness. Please make sure to bring Access Rider Guides.

Keith Mbulo, MV Transportation

Since the new Transfer trip expansion with Access July 1st, we could not anticipate how people would receive it, and if it would impact ridership. We've seen that in the morning hours, the OTP has significantly dropped. We will be having the regular driver bid coming in December, but what we are looking at changing some of the para-transit start times, so that we can have more personnel in those high traffic areas. You should see that coming in the beginning of the year.

We are currently in process of hiring operators. We currently have ten that are in training and we are putting them in to the BTW phase, which is behind the wheel training. They should be released within the next month, so you should see a significant change with that. We will continue hiring so that we don't run into these operator issues. In preparation for the March start, we will have enough operators to run the service.

HOLIDAY SCHEDULES

For everyone's information, Veterans Day will be regular service. We are closed Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day. Those are the only days that we are fully closed.

Arcy Torres, MV Transportation

Because we have had an increase in trips, one of the things that we have done to improve the on-time performance in the morning is we've added two additional routes. We are not going to wait until the next bid to add the routes, that is helping out with the transfer trips because before July 1, we were only using one driver to do the transfer trips to Olive View and because of the increase in trips, now we are having to send out either two or three drivers to Olive View.

Right now we have two positions open. We have a call center supervisor open and we have a call taker position open and currently conducting interviews for both of those positions.

Anthony Santiago, Access Services

I am the Operations Service Monitor for Access that works with the Santa Clarita Region. I also work with the northern region.

We just finalized our next round of community meetings that are coming up. The first community meeting starts on Monday the 18th. The community meeting for the Santa Clarita Region will be on Thursday, December 5, from 11:00 AM -1:00 PM at the Centre at 20880 Centre Pointe Parkway in Santa Clarita.

The Access website has been updated with the community meeting schedule. I have to confirm if the messaging on our phone tree has been updated to include the meeting schedule.

For the month of October, Santa Clarita has been meeting the performance, even though they had a few days where they have struggled, but overall they are meeting the performance measures. I know that some had mentioned the trip increase from October 2018 – October 2019, there has been an increase of about 600 trips, and about 200 of those trips are transfer trips. As many of you know, we have opened up transfer times. As I mentioned, Santa Clarita has done well with meeting the measurables.

During the month of October, we had activated our EOC which is our Emergency Operations Center and that was for three fires that happened. The Saddle Ridge fire that happened in the north region in the Sylmar area. The Tick fire which happened in the Agua Dulce/Santa Clarita area and the Getty fire which happened off the 405, near Getty Center Drive. Our EOC was activated for all three events and Access was basically all deck on hands with any service disruption with any riders that needed assistance to or from the affected areas. Our Santa Clarita Region Contractor have all done well with responding, they all cooperated with sending whatever resources that the County was asking for, and we came out of all three of those situations with not very many service

impacts because of the preparation with our EOC. Everyone responded well to that and we didn't have any major issues.

Kurt Baldwin directed a question to Anthony Santiago

I appreciate that you have that in place now for evacuations, it's been a long time coming. But I have a concern about the planned power outages, where the Access trip destination is in an area where the power is off and right now the policy is to return the person to their home. But that is not the way that people travel, sometimes that's a day of trips and if you just return the person to the home and I don't get to do anything anymore that could be a problem. The person that I am thinking of, the problem was, they had to pick up their child from school and get them home, and they wouldn't have been able to do that if they had just been taken home from that first trip where they ended up in an area where the power was off. Why don't we think about how we can be a little flexible with the rules there?

Anthony Santiago responded to Kurt Baldwin's question

Of course, I know that in an emergency situation it's not always going to be black and white and our chief operations officer might agree. He is aware with that and whenever the EOC's do get activated, whenever we have riders in affected areas we do pay a lot of attention to where they need to go and what their needs are obviously. We know that home may not be the best option for them especially in an emergency situation. But I will definitely follow-up in regards to the planned power outages because that is something that is a new normal with our emergency management team coordinator.

John Panico asked Adrian Aguilar to add to the January 2020 agenda, the discussion of "The new Normal" Emergency Shutting off powers and earthquakes and things like that, we need to discuss that a little bit more.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS

George Orentlicher

The morning after the fires, I didn't expect if Access would be working or not to my grateful surprise the bus showed up five minutes early and the driver mentioned that people had been cancelling. Basically the driver was very nice and very considerate and was willing to take me to my next destination, so I wanted to give a compliment to Maria who was the driver that day.

There's one other driver that I heard, I don't have his name because a lot of them don't have their name cards on there in front of the bus. He was real considerate to someone, a passenger who he had picked up who had left his wallet while waiting for the bus, so the driver got out of the bus, the passenger wasn't that mobile and he got it from the car. It was just sitting there and he gave it to the passenger. So we have good drivers. On

that note, they are really caught between two hard spots because they're the ones that have to arrive at a passenger's pick-up if they're late. Last Monday, it took me an hour and a half to get home. We took the less circular tour from Soledad, Plum Canyon, Copper Hill, Orchard, around Newhall and back to me on Soledad and Sierra Highway. I thought, "What kind of scheduling is that?" This happened on November 4th, 3:37 PM to 5:20 something.

Carmen Taylor

No Comments

Genevieve Carbone

On November 5, when I was picked-up from my church, I was five minutes away from my home, then the operator made a turn and I ended up forty five minutes away from home. It was a long trip and I don't understand why the operator did that. Please look into it, thank you.

Georgiana Meneou

I was out of electricity Monday thru Thursday because I live in Sand Canyon. And the shopping center was without electricity. The only thing that kept us going is that we bought a generator the second day so we could at least get the phones working. This new power deal is going to screw us all up and the buses are going to have a horrible time because the lights are out and there is so much traffic around. Everybody keep your ears and eyes open because those fires start up at night. Some of these dispatchers don't do directions very great. If they get drivers from out here, they know our area better.

Marilyn Grunwald

I was very disappointed in this lovely new small town we live in to discover that Access Services closed early on July 4th. We couldn't get a ride home from Fireworks. I'm pretty sure you guys can be open an extra hour on July 4th to make sure that we can go to public fireworks displays and come back. I'm adjusting to the fact that apparently you close early for Thanksgiving and Christmas. This interferes with religious services, socialization and with being able to go anywhere for Thanksgiving and Christmas dinner.

This is County-wide Access services, we need to be able to travel further and later. I know you extended the hours of the transfers to Olive View, but some of us actually have evening meetings over in the valley or Los Angeles and we can't go to those anymore if we don't have Access to take us. There are alternatives, but my understanding of Access Services is for those that do not have alternatives. This is a major way of getting around and frankly it is becoming a civil rights issue and I'm sure I'm not the only person that has ever said that in this room, so I wonder if anything is being done to improve on this situation.

Adrian Aguilar responded to Marilyn Grunwald's comments

I will touch on the dates in terms of closures. On certain holidays, we do operate what we call a "Sunday schedule". On the fourth of July, we would have closed or ended our service earlier than we normally would have. We can certainly look at it for next year. In terms of being closed on Thanksgiving and Christmas, we don't operate any services on those days, which is why Access does not operate on those days as well. We don't have any plans at this point to change that, but we can certainly include that in terms of our fare and services analysis. Part of that is we also want to make sure that our staff has the ability to spend time with their family on these holidays as well, but that is something that we can certainly look at.

Marilyn Grunwald added

Can I just add that I've heard these reasons before and it sounds logical that you only have to run where the regular buses run, but a lot of people who take regular buses the rest of the week are commuters and they all have cars. They all have alternate ways of getting around that we don't have. That is where it gets sticky and gets into a civil rights issue. I also know that having lived in the San Fernando Valley, drivers bid for those days because they get double time and they either have lunch at home or dinner at home. They can work four hour shifts. To say that staff doesn't entirely want to be there isn't entirely accurate.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting and the motion was seconded, all in favor. Meeting adjourned.

FUTURE MEETING

The next meeting for the Accessibility Advisory Committee will be held on Thursday, January, 9, 2020, 9:00AM at City Hall in the Century Room, 23920 Valencia Blvd., Santa Clarita, CA 91355.