

# City of SANTA CLARITA TRANSIT

## ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (AAC)

Minutes of the Committee Meeting

9:00 a.m.

Thursday, March 6, 2025

Carl Boyer Room, City Hall

### **CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman, John Panico called to order the meeting of the Accessibility Advisory Committee at 9:04 a.m.

### **MEMBERS & GENERAL PUBLIC PRESENT**

John Panico, Chairman	Karen Manke, Vice Chair
Keith Curry, Member	Arcy Torres, MV Transportation
Michelle Rush, MV Transportation	David Tamariz, MV Transportation
Grace Ferguson, City of Santa Clarita	Kathleen Herrera, City of Santa Clarita
Faustino Salvador, Access Services	Billy Jean Curry, Member of Public
Resty Musonge, Member of Public	

### **APPROVAL OF AGENDA & MINUTES**

After a review of the January meeting minutes, John Panico makes a request to make a small change to the minutes, adding Resty Musonge's name to the record in Manel Pushparajah's member comments. John Panico then makes a motion to approve the minutes. Karen Manke offers a second, Keith Curry votes aye, and the minutes from January are approved.

### **MEMBER COMMENTS**

**Karen Manke** begins comments regarding the Access 20-minute time window. Due to the inconsistency of the Access arrival times, often much later than the current 20 minutes, she has requested that a change be made to reflect a 25-minute window to avoid confusion and frustration for the patrons. She has experienced fellow riders that become angry and frustrated because their rides are not arriving within the 20-minute window. There was an incident where she tried to calm down a fellow rider that was getting very upset, but she was unsuccessful. The ride was 30 minutes past the pick-up time, and they ended up getting picked up by a Dial-A-Ride (DAR) vehicle.

*Michelle responds that the 20-minute window is the policy for Access, and they are not able to adjust the time window for Access. The goal is never to be outside of that window, there are unforeseeable factors like traffic that can cause a driver to be late.*

**Keith Curry** indicates that he has no comments at this time.

**John Panico** moves forward with Agency Updates.

## **AGENCY UPDATES**

### **Grace Ferguson, City of Santa Clarita**

Grace shared an update regarding the Transit Development Plan (TDP). The City Council and City Manager's office have reviewed the recommendations, and the recommendations will be implemented in three phases. Phase I- increasing capacity on the GO! service, adding four vehicles; introducing peak hour shuttle service from the Newhall Metrolink station to Needham Ranch; reduce frequency on routes 1 and 2 to 60 minutes, and extend route 2 to serve the FivePoints area near Magic Mountain; streamlining route 3 to end at the McBean Regional Transit Center (MRTC); adjusting the route 7 to provide direct service from Stevenson Ranch to the MRTC in addition to adding new service along Copperhill; eliminating two trips from the route 799 and 796. Phase II- increase frequency on the route 4, specifically at Bouquet Canyon Road and Lyons Avenue, from 60 minutes to 30 minutes; create bi-directional service on route 12 with 30-minute frequency; eliminate route 14. Phase III- redirect route 5 to operate along Soledad Canyon; provide new service along Golden Valley and adjust frequency to 60-minutes; shorten route 6, eliminating service to Stevenson Ranch (which will be serviced by route 7); extend service to Vista Canyon Transit Center (VCTC) and increase frequency to 30-minutes.

*Keith asks about the ridership in Vista Canyon.*

Grace states that the Metrolink is the only transit service operating in that area. Their ridership is low, but has increased year over year, and numbers have decreased for the Via Princessa station.

*Keith states that they are contemplating building a new senior center in that area in the future. He also mentions that Lost Canyon is still not open, and asks if the new assisted living and retail development will be serviced.*

Grace states that there isn't anything planned at this time for that development, and will probably be a part of the next TDP.

*John asks about the cost for the TDP.*

Grace indicates that the TDP study completed and recommendations will be forecasted in the budget.

*Keith states that there is an apartment complex on Golden Valley Road and Sierra Highway in the plans within the next 3 or 4 years.*

Grace states that Transit has already conditioned a bus stop on Golden Valley Road and Sierra Highway in anticipation of future service in that area, with the route service the shopping area (Lowes, Target, etc.) as well.

Grace also shares that she wants to bring the Senior Ambassador Program back online and will be working with the Senior Center on dates for recruiting riders. If you know anyone that is willing to be an ambassador, please share with Grace.

*Keith states that he has a couple of people in mind from the Senior Center. He will make sure to get their contact information to Grace.*

Arcy inquires about the Senior Ambassador Program.

*Grace states that it is a program that recruits seniors to teach other seniors on taking public transit. There would be a couple of field trips throughout the year, like the beach bus or a local route out to lunch. All ambassadors get training and fill out applications.*

### **Faustino Salvador, Access Services**

Faustino provides statistics for February (stats are not final until March 15):

- On Time Performance 91.3%
- Calls on Hold >5 minutes 8.2%
- Average hold 114 seconds

The basic contractors are ready for this weekend's Abilities Expo, a free three-day event that offers information, products and service for those with disabilities at the Los Angeles Convention Center. Access Services will have a booth at the event. The following weekend will be the Access Virtual Community Meeting, March 15, from 1:30 – 3:00 p.m., available in English or Spanish and closed-captioning will be available. Lastly, the annual 100% driver credentialed audit and continuous training on March 20, which ensures that all drivers are credentialed and have received their continuous training.

*Keith indicates that the CAC meetings are all online now.*

Faustino states that yes, they are all virtual and are held every month and are accessible to view on the website: [accessla.org](http://accessla.org).

*Keith indicates that he is interested in participating in the CAC as well, and Grace states that she will email him all of the information.*

### **Arcy Torres, MV Transportation**

Arcy states that she has some updates on staffing and personnel. The call center has struggled a bit as far as calls on hold. The call taker that was out on leave will be returning on Friday, a new call taker has been hired and training and MV has also hired an ambassador. We have seen an improvement in the call center with hold times, and it will only get better with the addition of staff. We are short a couple of drivers. There is one driver in BTW stage and will be testing the next day for the commercial license and we have a class of two starting the following Monday. The new driver bid is going into effect on Saturday which will coincide with the changes on the routes 5, 6, and 12.

*Keith asks if MV has room for a volunteer in the call center to assist with the calls.*

Arcy states that they do not. One thing that has been put in place in dispatch and the call center is placing drivers who have been cross-trained, in dispatch and/or the call center when needed. There are a couple of drivers currently on light duty, so the call center is full. It is more of managing the call center schedules. Changes will be made to the schedule to coincide with the increased hold times. Once the call taker returns from leave and the new hire is fully trained, we will be making the necessary changes to schedules.

*Karen states that Catalina was great in dispatch. She called Karen to let her know that her ride was there, and she did a really good job and wanted to share.*

### **Michelle Rush, MV Transportation**

The new drivers bid goes into effect on Saturday. As it pertains to Access and DAR, there have been a few changes made. Two additional runs have been added during peak times; have adjusted routes on the weekends; and the first 5 routes in the morning to start earlier. The adjustments have been made to help alleviate some of the longer trips.

*Keith asks when MV's contract expire.*

Grace states that the contract expires in 2026 and the City will have to go out to bid.

*Keith asks about an overall percentage number for complaints from ridership.*

Grace clarifies Keith's question, and states that on average there are 60 concerns and/or complaints regarding MV Transportation.

*Keith asks how long MV has had the contract.*

Arcy indicates this current contract is 8 years and they are in year 7 of the contract.

*Michelle clarifies that MV held the previous contract as well.*

### **David Tamariz, MV Transportation**

David states he is happy to have the call taker who was on leave coming back. She is Access certified, so that will help with the Access statistics. Even with drivers in the call center assisting, only certain call takers can answer Access calls. With Access certified call takers limited, that has caused our numbers to be less than ideal. With more call takers that are Access certified, we will see a significant improvement. At the last meeting Toshia had mentioned a commendation for Geraldine. Geraldine was very happy to hear Toshia's feedback about her positive experience.

*John asks about mechanical issues with the vehicles that may cause delays for riders.*

Arcy states that maintenance is fully staffed, and do not have any issues as far as vehicles being out of service for extended periods of time. They did have their CHP audit in December and received a satisfactory, so there aren't any deficiencies in maintenance.

*John asks the City about the old and new vehicles, vehicles coming in, vehicles going out to auction.*

Grace states that she will have an update for John at the next meeting, as she does not have that information with her. But vehicles are kept on a schedule based on mileage and age. Vehicles that are over the mileage or age specified are taken out of service and replacement vehicles are purchased.

*John asks about new electric vehicles.*

Grace states that we have one electric vehicle for our GO! service that is operating and Access will be providing an electric vehicle in approximately four weeks.

*John asks about EV chargers for electric vehicles.*

Grace states that we have one EV charger currently in our fleet for the GO! vehicle and will be working with Access to install an additional EV charger to accommodate their vehicle.

*Keith asks about the funding for the vehicles.*

Faustino, Arcy and Grace all state that the funding is from the Federal government.

*John asks about the drivers being trained for the different vehicles.*

Michelle states that the drivers did have training on operating the electric vehicle. The complications with the electric vehicles and adjusting runs to accommodate for the road times and charge times for the vehicle.

*Grace states that the charger that we have is considered a fast charger, with a full charge for the vehicle in approximately an hour and fifteen minutes.*

Keith again inquires about the Federal funding for Access, and he hopes that the new administration's policies does not affect Access services.

*Grace states that the City does attend meetings for federal funding information and Access services, and does stay on top of developments within the Federal funding.*

## **OLD BUSINESS**

N/A

## **NEW BUSINESS**

John Panico informs Resty Musonge that when she attends the next AAC meeting, to bring her resume so that it can be reviewed by the City for membership on the Committee. John also asks about Sheila Moulton, who attended the January AAC meeting. Grace indicates that Sheila was planning to attend but is out of town. John additionally states that the committee will hold nominations in May, and elections will be held during the June meeting.

### **GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Billy Curry states that she doesn't have any comments.

Resty Musonge stated that she has noted that there has been great improvement in dispatch and ride times on the vehicle have improved. There are 2 drivers, 1 drives the GO! bus. All drivers are gracious and help to open the door and close it. This particular driver remains on the wheel and was telling her to pull harder on the door. She had just had surgery; the door was hard to open and she was struggling. Additionally, the vehicle was 30-minutes late.

*Grace asks for the date of the incident.*

Arcy states that for paratransit, the drivers are to open the doors and assist the patrons. If it was GO! on demand, the driver would not provide assistance, but the doors are automated so it should have opened.

*Grace states that a general statement can be made at the safety meetings this week reminding drivers that they are to assist passengers with paratransit.*

Keith inquires about transit services for the upcoming Cowboy Festival.

*Michelle states that Transit will be providing the same shuttle service that was provided last year from the extra lot to Hart Park.*

Resty provides the date for the incident with GO!, which was February 10, from Lyons Avenue in Newhall.

*Kathleen states that she will try to pull the information from the GO! audit she will be conducting later in the day.*

John asks Kathleen if she has any additional comments.

*Kathleen states that Transit is still conducting weekly GO! trip audits, and call center phone call audits which are pulled at random. Everything is looking good and there are no glaring issues.*

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting is adjourned at 10:15 a.m.

### **FUTURE MEETING**

The next meeting is May 1, 9:00 a.m. at City Hall, Carl Boyer Room

