STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE:	**10/23/12**
SUBJECT:	**Minutes of the March 15, 2012, RTPA Meeting**
AGENDA ITEM:	**5-1**
STAFF CONTACT:	**Janie Coffman**

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the board approve the minutes of the March 15, 2012, RTPA meeting.

Daniel S. Little, AICP, Executive Director

Attachment: Minutes of the March 15, 2012, RTPA Meeting

UNAPPROVED MINUTES

SHASTA COUNTY REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING AGENCY
Thursday, March 15, 2012, 5:00 p.m.
City of Redding Council Chambers,
777 Cypress Avenue, Redding, California

(Note: These minutes are not intended to serve as a transcript or verbatim record of the proceedings of the Shasta County Regional Transportation Planning Agency, but rather as a record of the meeting time, place and attendance; the order and general nature of discussion; board deliberations; and actions taken, if any.)

Board members Dickerson, Jones, Moty, Comnick, Hawes, and Watkins were present. Board member Baugh was absent.

1. **Call to Order**
   Chair Moty called the RTPA meeting to order at 5:03 p.m.

2. **Joint Workshop between the Redding Area Bus Authority and the Shasta County Regional Transportation Planning Agency Regarding Public Transit**

Regular Calendar

3. **2012/13 Transit Needs Assessment (TNA) and Unmet Transit Needs Hearing (Public Hearing)**
   Executive Director Little noted that an unmet needs hearing is held annually. Comments received will be responded to in writing.

   Chair Moty opened the public hearing.

   Chair Moty read a speaker card from Dennis Bitschee (Bee-Chay), who would like a stop at Dubois (near Round Mountain) on the Burney Express.

   Don Kirk, citizen: If you cut back some of the routes entirely then you still have your ADA buses running, which make the farebox revenue go up because most of those are the ones that run empty. The fixed routes are the routes that have the higher farebox revenues. We do need the buses; there are people out there who need the bus to get around. Other cities are now charging around $1.75. Last year we offered to have the RABA board raise the fares and they said no.

   Ninzel Rasmuson, Far Northern Regional Center: We serve upwards to 6,700 people with developmental disabilities in a nine county area. The comments I'm sharing are from some of our clients:

1. Add more Saturday hours of operation.
2. Increase Shasta Lake routes.
3. Provide safety officials at the Masonic transfer station.
4. It is difficult to utilize the Burney Express to Hill Country Clinic in Round Mountain because of the times that it runs. Also, citizens in McArthur and Fall River Mills have no means of transportation to Burney or Redding.
5. Increase the frequency that the buses come by for pickup.
6. To get to the Shasta County Opportunity Center and home takes upwards of two hours each way.
7. Bus service stops at 7:00 pm which affects folks who work the 2-10 pm shift at the Shasta County Opportunity Center.
8. You have to ride the bus for hours to get to your destination, which in some cases is only a few miles away.

Chair Moty summarized a letter received from the Shasta Women's Refuge: They are in favor of maintaining the bus service as it is used quite a bit by their clients, helping them to get to other services.

Chair Moty closed the public hearing.

Consent Calendar

4-1 Personal Services Agreement – Integrated Traffic Data Collection and Management Plan

4-2 Personal Services Agreement (PSA) with APEX Technology, Inc. for Information Technology Services for RTPA Transition and Monthly Support Services

4-3 Personal Services Agreement (PSA) with Koff & Associates for Human Resource and Risk Management Services

4-4 Personal Services Agreement (PSA) with Aiello, Goodrich & Teuscher for Professional Accounting Services

4-5 Approve Lease Agreement for New RTPA Offices

4-6 Authorize Independent RTPA Assets and Office Improvements

Chair Moty pulled item 4-5 from the consent calendar at the request of board member Watkins. Chair Moty pulled item 4-3 and 4-4 from the consent calendar.

By motion made, seconded and unanimously carried (Hawes/Dickerson), the consent calendar was approved as amended.

4-3 Personal Services Agreement (PSA) with Koff & Associates for Human Resource and Risk Management Services

4-4 Personal Services Agreement (PSA) with Aiello, Goodrich & Teuscher for Professional Accounting Services

Chair Moty: There is a prepared contract to receive services until November 1, 2012. What happens after that?

Executive director Little: It was decided that there was a need for two phases of service. Phase one is for the transition, which ideally will be completed by July 1. The agreement is until the first of November in case there are any unforeseen issues to work out. Phase two is for ongoing support services. It was decided to wait on that contract because the level of support services needed is not known. We also want to see if we have a good experience with these particular consultants to be willing to use them for possibly a two or three year, as needed, contract.

4-5 Approve Lease Agreement for New RTPA Offices

Board member Watkins: The rent is for $3,056 a month and it's a three year lease. What were the negotiations that went behind this decision?

Executive director Little: The building was initially advertised for $1.25 a square foot; then dropped to 95-cents a square foot. It was negotiated that the lessor would pay for all the structural improvements, such as modifications to gain a conference room. We have a three-year extension provision.

By motion made and seconded (Hawes/Comnick), items 4-3, 4-4 and 4-5 passed unanimously.

There being no other business to discuss, chair Moty adjourned the meeting at 5:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Daniel S. Little, Executive Director

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REDDING AREA BUS AUTHORITY &
SHASTA COUNTY REGIONAL
TRANSPORTATION PLANNING
AGENCY
Special Meeting - Joint Workshop
Civic Center Community Room
777 Cypress Avenue
Redding, CA. 96001
March 15, 2012 5:15 p.m.

The Joint Workshop between the Redding Area Bus Authority (RABA) and Shasta County Regional Transportation Planning Agency (RTPA) was called to order by RABA Chair Francie Sullivan with the following Board Members Present: Norma Comnick, Dick Dickerson, Ron Dixon, Patrick Jones, David Kehoe, Missy McArthur and Regional Transportation Planning Agency (RTPA) Members Norma Comnick, Dick Dickerson, Glenn Hawes, Patrick Jones, Greg Watkins, and Chair Leonard Moty. RABA Board Member Rick Bosetti and RTPA Board Member Les Baugh were absent.

Also present were Assistant City Manager Barry Tippin, RTPA Executive Officer Dan Little, Public Works Director Brian Crane, Assistant Public Works Director Chuck Aukland, Redding City Clerk Pamela Mize, Executive Assistant Margery Stockwell, and RTPA Administrative Secretary Janie Coffman.

RABA Chair Sullivan explained that the educational Joint Workshop was convened to receive public input and provide vision/direction for current and future public transit needs and opportunities within RABA's service area. She said this discussion will assist iu the preparation of the update to the RABA's Short Range Transit Plan (SRTP).

PRESENTATION BY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR LITTLE REGARDING THE FUNCTION OF RTPA IN MEETING THE TRANSPORTATION AND DEVELOPMENT ACT (TDA) LAWS

RTPA Executive Director Little provided the following overview of the sources of funding for transit operations used to develop the yearly budget and how the funding flows. He referenced the document "Shasta County- 2012/13 Unmet Transit Needs Assessment," incorporated herein.

The Transportation Development Act (TDA) was established in 1971 by California's legislature to provide major funding for mass transportation. The main portion of TDA funding for the RABA bus system is the Local Transportation Fund (LTF) which is derived from one-quarter cent of the general sales tax, e.g., for every dollar in taxable sales, one-quarter of a cent goes to local LTF. That translates to approximately $6 million to Shasta County in LTF funding. 2009 data indicates the following sales tax revenue break-down by jurisdiction for LTF transit funds:

City of Anderson generates nine percent of total sales tax revenue, which equals $500,000;
City of Shasta Lake generates two percent of total sales tax revenue, which equals $100,000;
County of Shasta generates 12 percent of total sales tax revenue, which equals $700,000, and
City of Redding generates 77 percent of total sales tax revenue, which equals $4.7 million.

Under TDA laws, LTF revenue is administered by RTPA and must be distributed to each jurisdiction by population. This process is termed "apportionment." The City of Redding has 49 percent of the population and receives about $2.9 million annually in LTF funding, the cities of Anderson and Shasta Lake are apportioned about $350,000 each, and the County of Shasta, with 39 percent of the population, is allocated $2.4 million. LTF may be used for other eligible uses once all transit needs that are "reasonable to meet" have been met.

Another funding source through TDA is the State Transit Assistance (STA) fund, which is generated by a 75 percent State sales tax on diesel fuel and may only be used for transportation planning and mass transportation purposes. Although there is no required formula for funding distribution to the jurisdictions, RTPA historically distributes the funds by population, with Redding receiving approximately half at $500,000, $50,000 each to Anderson and Shasta Lake, and $400,000 to Shasta County.

An additional source of operation funding is Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funds, in which the urban areas receive Section 5307 funds. Approximately $800,000 is credited to the three cities with Redding receiving $600,000, and Anderson and Shasta Lake receiving $100,000 each. The County of Shasta receives a different source of FTA funds called Section 5311 which equals approximately $200,000.

A final budgetary consideration is the farebox ratio generated by RABA, which averages $800,000. This money is credited directly to RABA during the budget process. A transit operator who provides both demand response and fixed route service must maintain a combined ratio of fare revenue to operating cost (farebox ratio) of 20 percent in an urbanized area and 10 percent in a non-urbanized area. In counties with a population of less than 500,000, the RTPA may set the farebox ratio as low as 15 percent, if specific findings are made to justify the action.

The next step after developing a transit operation budget is to determine the amount of each agency's payment obligation to the RABA system and other transit needs. Any funds remaining after each jurisdiction's RABA obligations are met may be used for street and road maintenance.

RTPA retains approximately five percent ($400,000) in transportation funds prior to distribution to the other agencies. $300,000 goes to the Consolidated Service Transportation Agency, administered by Shasta Senior Nutrition Programs, for its lifeline service for transit dependent people outside the RABA service area. The remaining $100,000 is for RTPA administration.

According to the governing laws, up to two percent of LTF funds may be allocated for bike lanes but historically, RTPA has not pursued that avenue.

RTPA's next step is to determine the minimum level of transit service that should be provided within the region using the "Unmet Needs and Reasonable to Meet" definition and the farebox ratio as the gauge of performance. RTPA presently uses a 20 percent farebox ratio to determine what level is "reasonable to meet;" meaning that for every dollar spent to operate the RABA system, 20 cents must be generated through farebox revenues. If the farebox ratio does not meet the 20 percent goal, RTPA could reduce the level of transit service because it is not "reasonable to meet," or if the farebox ratio exceeds the 20 percent, RTPA could expand public transit service.

RTPA requests a budget from RABA for cost-sharing review. RTPA's cost-sharing policy agreement is an 80/20 formula where RABA's operating costs are allocated based on a weighted average of 80 percent of the services hours within the jurisdiction, and 20 percent of the population served. Then RTPA takes money out of each jurisdictional share to fund RABA. The current break-down is: City of Anderson, $200,000 (five percent); City of Shasta Lake, $150,000 (four percent); County of Shasta, $300,000 (seven percent); and City of Redding, $3.3 million (84 percent).

Additional transit services that RTPA has found "reasonable to meet" are: 1) Burney Express Service (Shasta County pays for that service entirely out of its shares at approximately $130,000); and 2) County Lifeline Service (Provided by Shasta County as additional transit service over the minimum required at about $45,000; administered by Shasta Senior Nutrition).

Funds remaining after all "reasonable to meet"transit is funded may be used for street and road maintenance or additional transit service by each jurisdiction. Currently the remaining funds equals approximately $700,000 for Redding, $300,000 for Anderson, $350,000 for Shasta Lake, and $2.5 million for the County of Shasta. STA funds are held in a reserve because they cannot be used for streets and roads.

RTPA manages the cash flow of transit funding and provides monthly payments to jurisdictions for street and road maintenance and to RABA for system operation.

Another area that RTPA uses to manage cash flow is the "true-up" process, which allows RABA to be fully functional during revenue fluctuations. The true-up process takes place about two years after the actual fiscal year, when audit figures become available.

Failure to meet the farebox ratio may result in a reduction of funds to a transit operator. The first year a transit operator fails to meet the farebox ratio a 3-year penalty cycle begins. Since RABA is a Joint Powers Agency (JPA), the jurisdictions' funds for other uses are decreased to make RABA whole. These funds may be returned to the jurisdictions in the following year during the annual true-up of TDA funds, providing funds are available. No TDA funds are lost to the region as a result of the farebox ratio penalty. Farebox ratio is basically a performance standard.

In response to RABA Board Member Kehoe, Mr. Little indicated that should a transit operator continue to fail to meet the farebox ratio, the RTPA must evaluate the service and look at the entire operations to determine if the system is no longer "reasonable to meet."

In response to Board Member Dickerson, Mr. Little explained that the 19 percent farebox ratio set by RTPA for RABA was a weighted average between the populations of the urban and rural areas, a discretionary deviation from the standard 20 percent farebox set by TDA law for the urban areas (three cities) and 10 percent for the rural areas (Burney Express Route and extra County routes).

PRESENTATION BY ASSISTANT PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR AUKLAND REGARDING THE OPERATION AND PERFORMANCE OF THE REDDING AREA TRANSIT AUTHORITY

Assistant Public Works Director Aukland provided the following overview of RABA performance including service area, headways, customers served, related system costs, past SRTP direction, and overall performance. His slide presentation is incorporated herein by reference.

Mr. Aukland displayed a general map of the RABA Service Area (Shasta County Urban Region) and explained that most service in the Redding area is centered around major arterials, such as Churn Creek Road, Victor Avenue, and Cypress Avenue, and is some distance from most neighborhoods and subdivisions. There are eight, one-hour headway routes within the City of Redding in a "hub and spoke" configuration. For example, the Downtown Transit Center (DTC) is the "hub" of several routes that loop around the DTC, and if any route is eliminated or modified, it affects the entire system. The hours of operation are from 6:30 A.M. to 7:30 P.M., most weekdays, and starts three hours later on Saturdays, with no Sunday service. Route 1, to City of Shasta Lake, has the limiting factor of being a one-direction route, and therefore, it may take longer to get to those destinations. The Anderson route, Route 9, starts at the Anderson Walmart and goes to downtown Redding on a two-hour headway. RABA receives complaints regarding the late start time on Saturday because that limits riders from using the bus to get to work.

There is no transit service to Palo Cedro, Bella Vista, Old Shasta, Cottonwood, or the State Route 44 Corridor, however, the County provides the Burney Express Service along the State Route 299 corridor (four times a day).

Transit routes are determined in a systematic and in-depth manner with input from the public, RTPA and RABA staff, consultants, and public transit policies and law, and then developed into the Short Range Transit Plan (SRTP). Factors such as density, population types (elderly versus youth populations), households without vehicles, and ridership studies are used to development the SRTP.

RABA is required by law to provide complementary Americans with Disability Act (ADA) paratransit service, commonly referred to as Demand Response service, in addition to fixed route service. Demand Response is a door-to-door service for those who are unable to access the fixed route system due to a disability. By law, Demand Response must be provided within three-quarter mile of any regular fixed route service.

The cost to run the transit system is about $5.1 million per year, with the bulk of expenditures going to the contract operator, Veolia Transportation. Other large expenditures are fuel and maintenance parts and supplies.

The basic fixed route fare is $1.50 with senior and disabled riders paying $.75 per ride (by law seniors/disabled must not pay more than half of full fare), children under 6 are free, and zone changes (from Anderson or Shasta Lake City to Redding), cost an additional $.75. RABA offers a monthly pass structure for access around the Redding local area at $48.25 a month, with seniors and disabled paying $24.00. Shasta Lake and Anderson riders pay significantly more for a monthly pass into Redding at $82.00. A youth pass has been added in the last two years for $29.00 a month. Only approximately 41 percent of riders pay the full fare price, whit seniors/disabled riders accounting for 47 percent.

Compared to other transit operators in the state, RABA's fare prices are slightly higher than the average. Wholesale expense reductions do not result in large savings for instance if Saturday service was eliminated, only about $178,000 would be saved, additionally some revenue would be lost.

A large component served by RABA are seniors and disabled persons. RABA has pushed towards engaging students to ride the bus, such as students attending Shasta College, Redding School of the Arts, and U-Prep. There is a definite social service component to RABA by assisting those who do not own vehicles. Additionally, RABA works with the "gatekeeper" agencies that assist people who are most in need of public transit services, such as Shasta County Public Health, the Womens' Refuge, and the People of Progress. RABA has recently starting working with targeted populations, such as international student pilots training at the Redding Municipal Airport, by adding an "express" service along the Airport Road corridor to assist these pilots with transportation to and from the airport.

Mr. Aukland commented on performance measures that assist RABA in determining how to best serve the public. The farebox recovery ratio is the prime performance measure used by RABA. The combined farebox ratio through fiscal year 2010-11 was approximately 15 to 16 percent, well below the required 19 percent set by the RTPA. Since the beginning of fiscal year 2011-12, ridership is up 14 percent, so the farebox ratio should increase also. The farebox ratio has fluctuated during the last ten years larger due to fare increases. Fare increases tend to bring the farebox ratio up, but then other factors come into play, such as price of fuel, contract operator negotiations, and the state of the economy, which then drag the farebox down.

Another farebox performance measure is by service type. The fixed route system performs much better than Demand Response because it is considerably less expensive to operate. Fixed route farebox performance is at approximately 17 to 19 percent, but Demand Response farebox ratio is between 9 and 11 percent. Farebox ratio comparison with other transit operators such as Fresno and Butte County show that RABA compares relatively well to others in the state.

Other performance measures include cost per mile to run the service, which is presently at $5.02 per mile, cost per hour-$72.00 per hour, and cost per trip-$4.73, which means the tax payer pays about $3.75 per trip to cover the total costs of providing the system. Passengers per hour is at about 15 riders per hour, an indication that the perception by some people that buses are running empty is not valid. The combined ridership for fixed route and Demand Response was about 750,000 rides per year or 2,800 daily.

Recent improvements to the RABA system include mobile data terminals, dispatch software system, fleet replacement, bus cameras, and route additions/modifications such as the school commuter route and the express Airport route.

Challenges for RABA that may prevent the system from being as efficient as possible are: 1) Service area size-which is larger than many other transit operators (100 square miles); 2) Service not confined to just an urban area; 3) Requirement to provide Demand Response service ($25.00 cost/trip); 4) Senior/Disabled population (e.g. routes with heavy wheelchair or walker use); 5) ADA accessibility; 6) Limited river crossings; 7) Distance to arterials and topography; 8) Fuel prices; and 9) Ease of traffic and free parking (less incentive to take public transit).

The economic benefits that the public transit system provides for Shasta County are: 1) Assisting citizens to get to work, medical appointments, retail centers, and recreation; 2) Interregional links, such as with Susanville and Trinity County; 3) Reduced congestion on the roadway and reduced greenhouse gas emissions; 4) Employment for at least 76 people who work with the public transit system; 5) Use of local vendors for public transit needs, such as fuel, parts, and maintenance.

PUBLIC COMMENT
Don Kirk spoke in favor of more service and shorter headways, but thought that RABA is doing a good job providing a needed service.

VISION AND IDEAS FOR RABA'S FUTURE
Public Works Director Crane asked for input from both boards as to their ideas and vision for RABA's future in the next five years. He said staff will use these ideas to generate a framework for development of the SRTP.

Mr. Crane stated that the first focus area was ideas regarding RABA's present mission statement, which states it will "...maintain a public transportation system that provides competitive transportation alternatives to the general public while serving the needs of the transportation disadvantaged when those needs cannot otherwise be reasonably met." He asked board members what transit service focus should be provided in the Short Range Transit Plan, e.g., should RABA emphasize a competitive transportation alternative and/or provide a competitive transportation alternative for those who don't have one?

RABA Board Member McArthur remarked that the word "competitive" in the mission statement was not accurate and thought that the mission statement should reflect "green," environmentally conscious stewardship (alternative fuel and "green" buses) by RABA.

RABA/RTPA Board Member Dickerson asserted that RABA could not compete with the automobile mode of transportation in this area. He stated that RABA did not need to have competitive goals in mind, but instead, provide a transportation alternative for those who don't have one. He also maintained that the general public would not use the bus as an alternative transportation to cut down on greenbouse gases.

RABA Board Member Sullivan thought that as fuel prices continue to climb, more people will use the bus even though they may have access to a vehicle.

In response to Board Member Dixon, Mr. Crane said that even though gas prices have increased substantially, ridership has been mostly level until the last six months when some route changes were made. He did not think that increased ridership correlated with increased fuel prices.

RABA/RTPA Board Member Jones voiced concern with the farebox ratio not meeting the prescribed farebox set by RTPA of 19 percent. He maintained that if capital expenses were included in computing the farebox ratio, there would be an even smaller return on each dollar spent. He asserted that not meeting the 19 percent farebox is an important issue that needs to be addressed and measures need to be taken to meet the prescribed farebox. He said the farebox was an indicator of whether funds were being used wisely. Jones' vision would be to condense and consolidate the public transit system and look at ways of making it more efficient.

RABA/RTPA Board Member Comnick commented that for the many years she has served on these boards, there have been ups and downs, and that the boards need to face the fact that RABA will never be a profitable entity. She asserted that a public transit system is vitally needed for those people who can not provide their own transportation.

Mr. Dickerson concurred with Ms. Comnick and emphasized that taxpayers will always be compelled to subsidize the transit system unless RABA could charge for the full cost of running the system. He asserted that Shasta County is obligated to provide a public transportation system to those in the community who need it and suggested that as the mission statement.

Mr. Crane distilled the comments received from the board and said that it appeared the hoards' consensus was that competition was not as important as providing a means of public transportation service for those who do not have other means of transportation.

RABA/RTPA Board Member Kehoe and Mr. Jones asked staff to dissect and analyze routes, both system-wide and individually for effectiveness, and consolidate, fine-tune and/or eliminate routes that are not meeting the needs of the public.

Mr. Crane said that it appeared the boards' consensus was that a performance analysis should be done on each separate route, but at the same time look at how each route affects other routes and the system on a whole, to improve the system's efficiency.

Ms. Sullivan emphasized that staff should look at City land use policies for long-term planning on public transit. She gave the example of the possibility in the next ten years of a large housing expansion and shopping center near Oasis Road, and questioned whether condensation of RABA would contradict the benefit of providing public transit to the homes and businesses in that area. She suggested the following land use correlated topics for analysis: 1) Where is affordable housing located? 2) Where do people live who depend on public transit? 3) What land use projects have been approved for the next 10 to 20 years that would create the need for expanded public transit? 4) Where is high density land use?

Ms. Snllivan commented that current transit service does not facilitate use for getting to and from work. She recommended that staff explore whether expanding public transit service for job workers would increase ridership.

RABA/RTPA Board Member Kehoe concurred with some of Mr. Jones' observations and asked board members to seriously consider running RABA like a business and develop a business model that would reflect a level of success. He posed the following question for RABA Board Members, "Are we using the taxpayers' money to the greatest efficacy possible?"

RTPA Board Member Hawes and RABA Board Member Dixon suggested that fares be slightly increased to raise the farebox and reflect true cost more closely, but that it be gauged with the Gross Domestic Product (or similar gauge) so that there is a limit to the increase.

RTPA Board Member Moty suggested that the farebox be dropped to the lowest limit of 15 percent so that public transit goals could be achieved, and indicated that the farebox ratio seemed to be an artificial performance measure.

RTPA Board Member Watkins responded that the farebox ratio is a good indicator as to individual route performance, and concurred with other board members that individual route performance should be analyzed in the Short Range Transit Plan and that public transit should be looked at more as a business, and not strictly as a subsidy. He added that marketing and advertising costs should be kept at a minimum because the majority of riders have to ride the bus due to no other choice.

Mr. Hawes commented that road maintenance was an important issue and that more money should be dedicated to roads.

In response to comments made by a uumber of board members, Mr. Little indicated that discussion about the farebox ratio could be agendized for the next RABA meeting in terms of making a recommendation to the RTPA.

Mr. Crane concluded the workshop by thanking the Boards for their comments and direction and advised them that staff would summarize the discussion and bring it back to the RABA hoard for consideration as a starting framework for the SRTP.

No official action taken.

ADJOURNMENT
There being no further business, at the hour of 4:52 p.m., RABA Chair Sullivan and RTPA Chair Moty declared the joint meeting adjourned.

APPROVED:

Francie Sullivan, Chair

ATTEST:

Pamela Mize, City Clerk and
Secretary to the Redding Area Bus Authority