



**Santa Cruz County  
Regional Transportation Commission**

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**MINUTES**

**Thursday, December 01, 2022  
9:00 a.m.**

**HYBRID MEETING  
County Board of Supervisors Chambers  
701 Ocean St., Room 525  
Santa Cruz, CA 95060**

**Community TV Zoom  
Web: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81296262340>  
Dial-in: +1 312 626 6799  
Webinar ID: 812 9626 2340**

1. Roll call.

The meeting was called to order at 9:05 a.m.

Members present:

Sandy Brown	Ari Parker
Kristen Brown	Andy Schiffrin (Alt)
Jacques Bertrand	Larry Pageler (Alt)
Randy Johnson	Robert Quinn (Alt)
Greg Caput	Felipe Hernandez (Alt)
Manu Koenig	Lowell Hurst (Alt)
Mike Rotkin	Tim Gubbins (Caltrans Ex-Officio)
Bruce McPherson	

Staff present:

Guy Preston	Tracy New
Luis Mendez	Sarah Christensen
Tommy Travers	Cindy Convisser
Shannon Munz	Riley Gerbrandt
Krista Corwin	Rachel Moriconi
Grace Blakeslee	Steven Mattas (RTC Counsel)

2. Oral communications.

Received public comment from:

Brett Garrett  
Carey Pico  
Brian Peoples

Commissioner Parker joined the meeting at 9:09 a.m.

3. Additions or deletions to consent and regular agendas.

A revised agenda was issued and posted to the website, as well as a replacement page for item 6, a handout for item 7, an add-on page for item 12, and the staff report and a handout for item 20.

Item 21A was added before closed session to review items to be discussed in closed session. Closed session item 22 was re-numbered to become 22A. After closed session, an open session was added. Item 22B was added for a report out for closed session. The Next Meetings item 22 was re-numbered to become 22C.

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

Commissioner Alternate Lowell Hurst motioned and Commissioner Alternate Schiffrin seconded the motion to approve the consent agenda. The motion passed unanimously with Commissioners Bertrand, S. Brown, Johnson, Koenig, McPherson, Rotkin, K. Brown, Parker, and Commissioner Alternates Hurst, Quinn, Schiffrin, and Hernandez voting "aye."

Received public comment from:

Brian Peoples

### **MINUTES**

4. Approved draft minutes of the November 03, 2022 Regional Transportation Commission meeting
5. Accepted draft minutes of the October 20, 2022 Interagency Technical Advisory Committee meeting

### **POLICY ITEMS**

*No consent items.*

## **PROJECTS and PLANNING ITEMS**

6. Approved authorizing the Executive Director to award a construction contract to Tunnelworks for rehabilitation of the drainage cross culvert and replacement of the existing catch basin along the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line (SCBRL) near Manresa State Beach (**Resolution 16-23**)
7. Accepted the 2022 UCS Supplement, consisting of two new appendices to the 2019 Unified Corridor Investment Study (**Resolution 17-23**)

## **BUDGET AND EXPENDITURES ITEMS**

8. Accepted status report on Transportation Development Act (TDA) revenues
9. Accepted status report on Measure D revenues

## **ADMINISTRATION ITEMS**

10. Adopted Assembly Bill 361 Findings for Virtual and Hybrid Meetings

## **INFORMATION/OTHER ITEMS**

11. Accepted monthly meeting schedule
12. Accepted correspondence log
13. Accepted letters from RTC committees and staff to other agencies -*none*
14. Accepted information items
  - a. State Legislative Update – Election Summary, Memorandum to Central Coast Coalition from Gus Khouri, Khouri Consulting LLC

## **REGULAR AGENDA**

15. Commissioner reports

Commissioner Koenig reported on his participation at the Self-Help Counties Coalition's Focus on the Future conference on November 13-14 with Senior Transportation Engineer Sarah Christensen; Mark Thomas's presentation on the Highway 1 Auxiliary Lane and Bus-on-Shoulder project; SCCRTC's favorable positioning for grant funds due to diverse expenditure plan; progress on other self-help counties' multimodal projects; post-COVID fiscal challenges of neighboring transit agencies; and a breakout session on improving public engagement.

Commissioner McPherson reported on his participation last month as the representative of our county to the annual session of the California State Association of Counties and his communications with executives from the Coastal Commission.

Commissioner Bertrand encouraged participation at the Coastal Rail Coordinating Council (CRCC) meetings. Staff will include a schedule of CRCC meetings in the next agenda packet.

Commissioner Alternate Hernandez reported on his participation at the vigil for World Day of Remembrance for Traffic Victims killed in Watsonville, hosted by the Community Traffic Safety Coalition and Vision Zero.

Commissioner Caput arrived to the meeting.

16. Appreciation for Outgoing Commissioners (Bertrand, Caput, Coonerty, Alternate Hurst, and Retiring Caltrans Ex-Officio Gubbins)

Chair Sandy Brown presented the Outgoing Commissioners with certificates of appreciation. Chair Brown and each of the Outgoing Commissioners shared some words to honor and acknowledge their years of public service.

Received public comment from:  
Michael Saint

17. Election of Chair and Vice-Chair

Chair Brown announced that the Chair and Vice-Chair nominating committee for 2023 nominate Manu Koenig for Chair and Kristen Brown for Vice-Chair. Commissioner Alternate Schiffrin motioned and Commissioner Bertrand seconded the motion to accept the committee nominations for Manu Koenig to the Chair and Kristen Brown to the Vice-Chair positions.

Chair Brown delivered remarks on her experience serving as Chair and appreciation for the support of staff. Commissioner Bertrand expressed his confidence in the committee's nominee for Vice-Chair Kristen Brown.

The motion passed unanimously with Commissioners Bertrand, S. Brown, Johnson, Koenig, Caput, McPherson, Parker, K. Brown, Rotkin, and Commissioner Alternates Hurst, Quinn, and Schiffrin voting "aye."

Received public comment from:  
Brian Peoples

18. Director's Report

Executive Director Guy Preston delivered the director's report and communicated updates regarding recruitment for the Measure D Taxpayer Oversight Committee; SCCRTC's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Open House scheduled for December 8, 2pm-7pm.

19. Caltrans report

Caltrans District 5 Director Tim Gubbins delivered the project update list and an oral report, highlighting efforts by the Federal Highway Administration to distribute a Vulnerable Road User Safety Assessment to all states including California; the Safe Systems approach adopted by U.S. Department of Transportation as well as Caltrans; coordinated safety campaigns with CHP to reduce impaired, drowsy, and distracted driving; flexible grant funds coming from the Office of Traffic Safety.

Commissioner Gubbins responded to a question regarding a project on Holohan Road and Highway 152. Commissioners discussed pedestrian and bike safety challenges on Highway 1, Highway 129, and Highway 152 through Downtown Watsonville and appreciation for Caltrans' partnership.

20. Contract Award for Professional Engineering and Environmental Services and Amendment to the Measure D-Rail Category 5-Year Program of Projects – Electric Passenger Rail Transit & Trail Project between Pajaro Junction and Santa Cruz along the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line

Senior Transportation Engineer Sarah Christensen delivered the staff report.

Commissioners discussed: a variety of items related to this staff report and recommendations including the RTC's shared responsibility for property disputes that may arise; terms and interest rates of the Measure D inter-program loans; FEMA reimbursement for the 2017 storm damage repairs; benefit of engineering work to be performed; funding needs for the project and possible TIRCP grant; potential ridership ; initial modelling for the project; coordination with the Coastal Commission; costs and benefits; public engagement; coordination with state rail plan.

Executive Director Preston responded to Commissioner questions regarding a recent article on transit ridership; grant funding availability for an environmental document; cost estimates as projects develop; and the process for amending the Measure D expenditure plan.

Received public comment from:

Sally Arnold

Mark Mesiti-Miller, Friends of the Rail and Trail

Judy Gittelsohn  
Jean Brocklebank  
Brian People, Trail Now  
David Date  
Michael Saint  
Ben Vernazza  
Lani Faulkner, Equity Transit  
Saladin Sale  
David Van Brink  
Keith Otto

Commissioner Alternate Schiffrin motioned and Commissioner Caput seconded the motion to approve **Resolution 18-23**:

1. Authorizing the Executive Director to negotiate and execute a professional engineering and environmental services contract for the electric passenger rail transit & trail project between the Pajaro Junction and Santa Cruz along the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line with HDR Engineering, Inc. for a total amount not to exceed \$3 million to begin preparing the project concept report;
2. Amending the Measure D-Rail Category Program of Projects to add funding in FY23 through FY24 to partially fund the consultant contract through Task 1;
3. Amending the RTC FY23 budget accordingly; and
4. Authorizing inter-program loans from other Measure D fund categories to the Measure D Rail category, if needed.

The motion passed on an 11-1 vote with Commissioners Bertrand, S. Brown, Koenig, McPherson, Parker, K. Brown, Rotkin, Caput and Commissioner Alternates Quinn, Hurst, and Schiffrin voting "aye," and Commissioner Johnson voting "no."

Commissioner Parker departed the meeting and Commissioner Alternate Pageler stepped in to replace her.

21. Construction Contract Award – Pajaro River Bridge Rehabilitation Project along the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line

Senior Transportation Engineer Sarah Christensen delivered the staff report.

Received public comment from:

Mark Mesiti-Miller, Friends of the Rail and Trail  
Brian Peoples, Trail Now  
Judy Gittelsohn

Deputy Director Luis Mendez responded to a question by a member of the public regarding availability of staff reports and freight reports.

Commissioner Rotkin motioned and Commissioner Koenig seconded the motion to approve **Resolution 19-23**, accepting the bid for construction of the Pajaro River Bridge Rehabilitation Project along the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line (SCBRL) and authorizing the Executive Director to execute a construction contract with the lowest responsible bidder, Euro Style Management for a total amount not to exceed \$287, 885.

The motion passed unanimously with Commissioners Bertrand, S. Brown, Johnson, Koenig, Caput, McPherson, K. Brown, Rotkin, and Commissioner Alternates Hurst, Quinn, Schiffrin, and Pageler voting "aye."

21a. Review of items to be discussed in closed session

RTC Counsel Steve Mattas communicated that the Commission will discuss one item in closed session, covering three real properties and the potential for real property acquisitions and that reportable action is anticipated.

The Commission adjourned to closed session at 12:10 p.m.

### **CLOSED SESSION**

#### **Closed session began at 12:15 p.m.**

22a. Conference with Real Property Negotiators (Pursuant to Government Code Section 54956.8) Property: 7992 Soquel Drive 7992 Soquel Drive (APN 039-232-03), 7994 Soquel Drive (039-232-02), 7996 Soquel Drive (APN 039-232-01) Aptos, CA 95003

Agency Negotiators: Guy Preston, Luis Mendez and Sarah Christensen  
Negotiating Parties: SCCRTC and The Oak, LLC Dennis and Julie Ann Jacobsen

Under negotiations: Price and terms for acquisition of property

### **OPEN SESSION**

The Commission reconvened in open session at 12:55 p.m.

22b. Report out on closed session

RTC Counsel Steve Mattas reported that on an 11-0 vote, the Commission authorized staff to obtain appraisals, make formal offers to purchase the fee interest in the properties, obtain rights of entry from the property owners to

perform physical assessments of the property and to negotiate and then to present to the commission, if the parties come to an agreement, a purchase and sale agreement for the properties. The purchase and sale agreement terms would be associated with the appraisal itself that the RTC would obtain. The RTC also authorized staff to enter into contracts for right of way services either with Associated Right of Way Services (AR/WS) or the County of Santa Cruz in an amount not to exceed \$157,500 for the appraisals and the right of way activities that are necessary.

#### 22c. Next meetings

The next RTC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, January 12, 2023 at 9:00 a.m. at the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors Chambers located at 701 Ocean Street, Room 500A, Santa Cruz, CA 95060.

The next Transportation Policy Workshop meeting is scheduled for Thursday, December 15, 2022 at 9:00 a.m. by Zoom teleconference.

The meeting adjourned at 12:56 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Yesenia Parra  
Administrative Services Officer