

# LASSEN TRANSIT SERVICE AGENCY

November 4, 2024

## (1) CONVENE:

LTSA's Regular Meeting convened at 1:00 p.m. by Co-Chairman Brown, at City of Susanville Council Chambers, 66 North Lassen Street, Susanville, CA.

Commissioners Present: Albaugh, Brown, Gallagher, Miller, Neely and Schuster.

Commissioners Absent: None

Others Present: John Clerici, LCTC, Caleb Schortz, Pete Heimburger, Cynthia Raschein, Jasleen Mutti, and LTSA.

### 1.1 Pledge of Allegiance.

1.2 Agenda Approval: On a first by Mr. Brown, and second by Mr. Gallagher, it was unanimously passed to approve the agenda.

1.3 Minutes Approval: On a first by Ms. Schuster, and second by Mr. Gallagher, it was unanimously passed to approve the August 12, 2024, minutes.

## (2) CORRESPONDENCE / PUBLIC COMMENT

2.1 Correspondence: None.

2.2 Public Comment: None.

## (3) NEW BUSINESS

3.1 Drug & Alcohol Policy Update: Ms. Mutti presented the update to the Drug and Alcohol Policy to the Board. She explained that on September 5, 2024, FTA requested 5311 sub-recipients to update, adopt and distribute compliant Drug and Alcohol Policies before December 1, 2024.

Changes to the policy added a statement to address the prohibition of any consumable legal or illegal product that carries a warning of mental functioning, motor skills, or judgement being adversely affected. Further changes include an update to the Pre-Employment Testing section which clarified that an applicant who fails a pre-employment drug test will not be eligible for hire at any time. Other updates include the Reasonable Suspicion Testing Section by adding paid administrative leave for employees who are sent for reasonable suspicion, Post Accident Testing Section to clarify that administrative leave would be pending the outcome of a test result following an accident, Split Specimen Test Section – clarifying the process of requesting such a test, Test Refusal Section – changing two instances where the previous policy mentions “breath or urine specimen” to “specimen for a drug or alcohol test”. The last change to

the Drug and Alcohol Policy included the Updated Contact Section – adding “DAPM email” and a second “MRO name and contact”.

On a first by Mr. Gallagher, second by Mr. Brown, it was unanimously passed to approve the changes in the Drug and Alcohol Policy.

- 3.2 Advertising Policy:** Ms. Mutti updated the Board regarding proposed changes to the LTSA Advertising Policy. The change removes firearms from the list of restricted content. Ms. Mutti also explained that all advertising changes will be brought to the Board for review. She also stated that all advertising applications are subject to staff review.

On a first by Mr. Gallagher, second by Mr. Brown, it was unanimously passed to approve the removal of firearms from the list of restricted content on the Advertising Policy contingent upon County Counsel’s approval.

- 3.3 Replacement Purchase of Bus #21:**

Ms. Mutti briefed the Board on the 5339 funding received in 2022/2023 in the amount of \$190,495.86 that was set-aside for the replacement of Bus #21. The new gasoline bus, Bus #29, was ordered in that same year. The new bus arrived in August 2024. Ms. Mutti asked the Board to approve the invoice for it in the amount of \$189,974.29. She also reported the new bus will be put into service in January 2025.

Discussions were held regarding the cost variances of gasoline vs. diesel buses. Mr. Shortz responded yes and reported that the City Route buses that are on 395 are gasoline. Most of the other buses on County Route are diesel, making it harder to answer the question as their life is impacted by so many factory- the terrain they are running on, frequent stops etc. He also mentioned the low floor buses are smaller in size and their cost is considerably less.

On a first by Mr. Gallagher, second by Mr. Brown, it was unanimously passed to approve the invoice from Model 1 Commercial Vehicles, Inc. in the amount of \$189,974.29.

- 3.4 FY 2024/25 Paratransit Services Cost Increase:**

Ms. Mutti opened discussions with the Board regarding the Paratransit Services Cost Increase for 2024/25 to accommodate the increasing insurance costs. She also noted that the Board had advised LTSA staff to move forward in amending the Paratransit contract at the August 12, 2024 meeting as directed by County Counsel. County Counsel’s review of Paratransit’s costs increase request concluded that it does not meet the requirement to open negotiations under force majeure, but did permit the staff to move forward with the Board’s direction from the August 12, 2024 meeting.

At the direction of the LTSA Board and County Counsel, LTSA staff met with other agencies to discuss the cost increase and also reviewed Lake Transit’s cost analysis. Based on their research, LTSA staff recommends the Board to move forward with an amendment to increase the contract cost with Paratransit Services, Inc. to cover the increase in insurance costs and to prevent any disruptions to transit services.

Mr. Neely asked if County Counsel had already approved this. Mr. Heimbigner reported that Counsel approved for the contract to be opened for discussion. He also stated an

amendment may be needed once discussions are complete and mid-year adjustments would need to be made.

Mr. Albaugh stated his concern regarding the insurance costs and the fact they had doubled. Further discussions were held regarding the solvency of the insurance industry, especially nationwide, with the fires, hurricanes, and the floods. Christie Scheffer of Paratransit was asked to respond to the increase. She reported that their agency went to great lengths to find other options with the rise in insurance costs. She also indicated that her research included reaching out to 15 different markets. Their findings determined what we all have guessed, the issues that our nation has faced have changed the insurance industry. Mr. Albaugh asked if we could self-insure, Ms. Scheffer stated “no”. Mr. Heimbigner mentioned the possibility of creating a consortium with other agencies. Mr. Gallagher also asked if LTSA could reach out to another special district, like SDRMA. Mr. Heimbigner also reported that Lassen County already participates with 17 other counties with Trindel. Mr. Scheffer stated Paratransit is working with the Cal-Tip insurance pool. Mr. Shortz reported started the Target Zero training to reduce accidents and possibly lower the rates.

The discussions ended and Mr. Albaugh asked the Board to move forward. With a motion by Mr. Neely, and a second by Ms. Miller, it was passed to approve the increase for the Paratransit contract to include the increased insurance costs. Mr. Albaugh votes “no”.

### **3.5 Second Amendment to Agreement between LTSA an ETA Transit Systems, Inc.**

Ms. Mutti briefed the Board regarding the tracking software that is used for bus tracking. LTSA requires tracking hardware for the new bus #29, as the equipment from a previous out of service vehicle has become faulty and cannot be re-used. Since the current contract only covers the cost of the annual subscription fee, the staff recommends the Board approve the second amendment, thus increasing the total cost of the agreement from \$90,265 to \$103,624 until August 31, 2028. This increase will cover the cost of the new equipment and installation.

Caleb Shortz reported that the install for the new bus would be \$3500. Mr. Albaugh asked if LTSA could install in house instead of bringing ETA up to Lassen County. Mr. Shortz responded and explained ETA will void the warranty if they are not the ones to install.

With a motion to approve by Ms. Miller, and a second by Mr. Neely, it was unanimously passed to approve the second amendment to the LTSA agreement with ETA Transit Systems in the amount of \$103,624.

### **3.6 FY 2024/25 560 & 570 Budget Changes:**

Ms. Mutti asked the Board for direction in regards to a mid-year budget adjustment that would consider adding the FTA grant funding for capital improvements from the 5339A and 5339B funding streams. The total funds received were \$251,039.94.

The changes in the 2024/25 Budget allows LTSA to propose additional improvements to the bus yard that included parking lot concrete, security cameras, security gate improvements, garage entrance doors, radio upgrades, the Paratransit amendment for

insurance costs, the purchase of a UTV with a snow plow, the purchase of a van, and the ETA costs for install of the tracking equipment in the new bus. The total of all new expenses is \$257,679.00. The difference will be covered by reserves.

Mr. Neely asked if there was enough in reserves. Mr. Heimbigner reported yes. Mr. Heimbigner also reported a mid-year budget adjustment will be completed and all reports presented will be cleaned up. Mr. Gallagher asked if LTSA was looking for a consensus since no motion is required.

A consensus was reached.

**(4) OTHER BUSINESS**

4.1 **Reports by Executive Director and Staff:** None.

4.2 **Report by Lassen Rural Bus Manager/Staff:**

Caleb Shortz gave a monthly report for the LRB staff. They are working at 100% staffing. He also reported on the success of the Safe and Sane event as well as the new Riders Guides being released in both English and Spanish. He also mentioned the new QR codes on the guides will help the riders with details of routes.

Mr. Shortz commented that on time performance was at 90%.

Returned shopping carts total 879 for the month and he explained that Safeway is working on a perimeter stop that will help with the lost carts. Walmart was in the work with the help of recovering their carts.

Mr. Neely asked if Dial-A-Ride was accessible to Janesville residents. Mr. Shortz responded, not presently. He had described a previous trial period for Dial-A-Ride to Janesville that resulted in about 8-9 riders that did not justify the cost of the trial period which ended up being approximately \$15,000.00

Mr. Albaugh asked if the bus service received requests for ballots to be delivered on Election Day. Mr. Shortz responded yes.

4.3 **Matters brought forth by the Agency:** None.

4.4 **Set date for the next Regular Agency Meeting for January 13, 2025, at 1:00 p.m.**

4.5 **Adjournment:** 2:02 p.m.