

**San Joaquin Valley Rail Committee Meeting**

**Thursday June 30, 2011**

**Richmond Amtrak/BART Station; Richmond, Calif.**

**\*\*\*Due to Meeting Participants who were onboard Train 533 coming from Sacramento which had a trespasser incident in Davis, Calif., the meeting start time was pushed back.\*\*\***

**1. Call to Order and Announcements at 11:05 am.**

**Chair John Pedrozo called the meeting to order and had the Pledge of Allegiance.**

**Member Howard Abelson of Contra Costa County introduced Vice Mayor Tom Butt of Richmond, who welcomed everyone in attendance to today's meeting. Mr. Butt explained how the Richmond Station is key to its downtown revitalization program, which includes Transit Oriented Development (TOD) homes and businesses adjacent to the station.**

**Art Lloyd, Facilitator, then conducted the roll call.**

**A moment of silence was led by Pat Merrill, Amtrak Vice President, in memory of the victims of the California Zephyr train accident that occurred on Friday, June 24, 2011, outside Fallon, Nevada.**

**People in the room then introduced themselves and who they represented.**

**2. A) Discuss the Gap Closure between Bakersfield and Los Angeles**

**Mr. Angelo Lamas from Merced County has asked to table this motion until the September 2011 meeting. Mr. Hank Fung from Los Angeles County wanted to inquire if an Ad Hoc Committee could be created under the statute of the SJVRC. The issue was tabled until an Ad Hoc Committee is formed. These issues will be then brought back to the whole SJVRC for further discussion.**

**B) Approved minutes from the April 28, 2011 meeting at 1215 hrs.**

**3. Public Comments on Non-Agenda Items**

**Sup. David Rogers from Madera County stated Madera County has adopted their preferred California High Speed Rail (HSR) alignment through the county and submitted it to the California HSR Authority.**

**Bob Snoddy from Kern County stated that Kern County will host a California HSR meeting in Bakersfield on July 13, 2011.**

#### **4. Guest Speaker**

**Partners Performance Action Team (PPAT)/Amtrak: Pat Merrill, Amtrak.**

**Mr. Merrill presented what the PPAT team does. It basically looks at the performance measures in improving the service on each Amtrak route. This is made up of Amtrak personnel from all areas throughout the company. The results are then delivered to the Amtrak Superintendent, Pacific Division, Jay Commer, who then sends the report to Amtrak upper management, Bill Duggan and Mr. Merrill, who sit on the Regional Steering Committee. That committee then sends their recommendations with the report to Amtrak's National Vice President of Operations.**

**Lee Goldenberg from Caltrans was pleased that Amtrak brought forth the PPAT initiative and he was looking forward to give his input as corridor manager at Caltrans. This has led to improving on board services such as: baggage; on-board cleanliness, specifically the restrooms; food service. Mr. Goldenberg stated that it's a great opportunity for the State to take a hard look at improving our service on an ongoing basis.**

**At this point, due to four of the next six speakers who were on Train 533 arriving within 5-10 minutes, Chair Pedrozo decided to call for an early lunch break.**

**The meeting resumed at 1215 hrs.**

#### **5. Informational Reports**

**A) Amtrak California Train Operations, Greg Santos, Amtrak. Mr. Santos stated OTP for April was 92.8%. Train 711 had a perfect 100% mark for the month. The OTP for May was 88.4%. Train 712 had the best at 96.8% for the month. Still awaiting the final numbers for June, this will be provided at the Sept. Rail Committee meeting. Mike Hamilton, Amtrak's Assistant Superintendent of Operations for the SJs: up to today, despite some of the trespass incidents, the SJ trains in June are 2<sup>nd</sup> in the nation in OTP with just over 90%. Mr. Hamilton stated the second on-board cleaner has been hired and is in training and will start on July 7.**

- B) Amtrak Government Affairs, Jonathan Hutchison, Amtrak. Mr. Hutchison stated that Amtrak is celebrating an unprecedented 19 consecutive months of record ridership throughout the nation. Gave updates on the increased ridership and revenues on the SJ's. In FY11, Amtrak's budget was cut back \$81 million (\$1.48 billion). For FY12, Amtrak has requested \$2.2 billion, which is the authorized amount. Amtrak does not expect to be fully funded due to the current political and economic climate.**
- C) Amtrak Thruway Bus Operations, Andrew Felden, Amtrak. Mr. Felden stated with the ridership increasing, we are adding another scheduled bus for Trains 713 and 714 between Sacramento and Stockton starting tomorrow, July 1, 2011. It will be a trial period through the rest of the year. After Jan. 1, 2012, it will be decided if it will be a permanent change. Moved the Red Bluff stop to the Red Bluff Transit Center. The stop has seen an increase in ridership since the move. Also, the Elk Grove bus stop will now have a split pick up/drop off due to safety reasons. Bus Operation is in the final review process for sending RFP's for all the Southern California routes. Current estimate of award date for the new contracts is October 1, 2011.**

## **6. Members Comments**

**Chair Pedrozo stated that through Operation Lifesaver, Merced County has put a proclamation together recognizing September as Railroad Safety Month and had scheduled an event in Planada on July 7. Bob Alexander from Operation Lifesaver to spoke about the importance of railroad safety in the community due to the recent increase in trespass incidents. Mr. Abelson thinks it's a great idea to introduce members of the public not only to railroad safety, but to potentially use it as a tool to help increase ridership in educating the public.**

**Mr. Goldenberg wanted to publically thank the City of Richmond and Mr. Abelson for hosting today's meeting.**

**Chair Pedrozo stated his displeasure that Mr. Bronte from Caltrans was again absent for the third consecutive meeting. Chair Pedrozo will be drafting a letter to Mr. Bronte expressing his displeasure. He stated a lot of people clear their entire schedules to attend the meeting.**

**The next meeting will be in Sacramento on September 29, 2011.**

**With no further comments, Chair Pedrozo adjourned the meeting at 12:57pm.**