



**GOLD COAST TRANSIT
MINUTES OF REGULAR BOARD MEETING
MARCH 5, 2008**

Call to Order

Chair Bill Fulton called the regular meeting of the Board of Directors of Gold Coast Transit to order at 10:10 a.m. at the GCT Administrative Facility, 301 E. Third St., Oxnard, California.

Roll Call

Chair Bill Fulton
Director Toni Young
Director Joe DeVito

Absent
Vice-Chair John Flynn
Director Thomas Holden

Staff Present: Steve Brown, Acting General Manager/Director of Planning and Marketing
Steve Rosenberg, Director of Administrative Services
Andy Mikkelson, Director of Transit Operations
Rob Lurie, Director of Fleet and Facilities
Ray Clayton, General Counsel
Roxanna Ibarra, Office Manager and Clerk of the Board

Others Present: Members of the Public

Chair Fulton acknowledged that a voting majority of the Board was not present, so the board would convene as a committee of the whole. He directed staff to schedule a special meeting prior to next month's scheduled meeting to affirm this month's business.

Ceremonial Calendar

- The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Director DeVito
- Presentation of Special Recognition to Linda Marie Soshea, Payroll and Benefits Specialist, in recognition of her ten-year anniversary as a SCAT/GCT employee.
- Special recognition was awarded to two employees who were unable to attend; Joe Rios, Maintenance Supervisor, in recognition of his twenty-five-year anniversary as a SCAT/GCT employee, and Jonathan Trujillo, Senior Mechanic, in recognition of his ten-year anniversary as a SCAT/GCT employee.
- Presentation of Special Recognition to Director Joe DeVito, in recognition of his service as Chair of the Board from July 2006 through December 2007. Chair Fulton thanked Director DeVito for his inspirational leadership and friendly demeanor.

General Public Comment

No public comment.

Board of Directors' Report

- Director Young reported that the city of Port Hueneme is celebrating its sixtieth anniversary this month, and invited people to attend the city's celebration on March 19th at 7:00 p.m.
- Chair Fulton announced that he would be attending the APTA Legislative Conference next week, and would be meeting with Congresswoman Lois Capps during his visit.

General Manager's Report

Chair Fulton acknowledged that General Manager Deborah Linehan was on bereavement leave. Her father, John Linehan, passed away on February 19th. Acting General Manager Steve Brown conveyed General Manager Linehan's thanks to everyone who sent flowers, cards and condolences.

Mr. Brown:

Introduced the new Gold Coast Transit lapel pins, and announced that the new employee service award pins will be given to all service award recipients going back to July.

Stated that reports on GCT's advertising policy and bus painting programs, two items to which staff was asked to respond, would be continued until next month. No additional buses will be painted until this discussion has taken place.

Informed the board that GCT's long-range planning kickoff meeting, which took place at the Ventura City Hall on March 4, went very well. There was significant participation and information from all of our members; the input will eventually be used to develop a regional transportation plan.

Told the board that GCT is working closely with the City of Oxnard Public Works Department on their final plans for the Hayes Street closure project, and we expect to bring a joint presentation on the project to the board next month.

Consent Agenda

1. Consider Approval of Minutes of Regular Board Meeting of February 6, 2008
2. Consider Approval of Expenditures for the Month of January 2008
3. Treasurer's Cash Report for January 2008
4. Budget Income Statement – Seven Months Ending January 2008
5. Financial Statements and Schedule of Money Transfers for January 2008
6. Consider Approval of General Manager's Expense Reports for February 2008

Director Young moved to recommend to the full board approval of the Consent Agenda Items 1 through 6. Director DeVito seconded the motion.

Roll Call

Ayes: Chair Fulton	Noes: None
Director DeVito	Absent: Director Flynn
Director Young	Director Holden

The motion passed unanimously.

Formal Items

7. **Consider Authorizing the General Manager to Execute a Contract with MV Transportation for Operation of ACCESS Paratransit Service – Ken Mills, Buyer/DBE Officer**

Ken Mills, Buyer/DBE Officer, described the process by which GCT advertised nationally for a five-year (with five one-year options) contract to operate GCT ACCESS Paratransit Service. GCT received two responsive bids, from First Transit (formerly Laidlaw, the incumbent) and MV Transportation. An evaluation committee consisting of Steve Brown, Director of Planning and Marketing; Robert Lurie, Director of Fleet and Facilities; Andrew Mikkelson, Director of Operations; Margaret Heath, Paratransit and Special Projects Manager; Roc Pulido, City of Camarillo Traffic Engineer; and Ken Mills, Buyer/DBE Officer reviewed and rated the bids with regard to technical ability, cost of service and probability of success. The final scoring was MV Transportation 83 points, First Transit 77.2 points. Mr. Mills indicated that although MV's price was 11.2 percent higher over the five-year base period, the team's conclusion is that, notwithstanding the price increase, the best value for operating GCT ACCESS will be achieved with MV as the contractor.

Mr. Mills described some of the issues addressed by the evaluation team, such as:

- MV proposes to pay higher wages than First Transit, reducing turnover and retraining and improving quality of service.
- MV can provide superior support for our Trapeze scheduling software.
- MV provides more a viable local and regional management team and a higher level of corporate support. It was clear to the team that First Transit's corporate management is not completely settled after the recent merger with Laidlaw Transit Services and that the commitment for support of the local operation may not be adequate.

Additionally, Mr. Mills stated that MV has offered a "Guarantee" to be included in the contract which extends to GCT the right to terminate the contract at any time, with MV refunding the previous 12 months profit from the contract. Mr. Mills recommended that the board authorize the General Manager to execute a contract with MV Transportation for the period July 1, 2008 through June 30, 2013, with five one-year options, for operations and maintenance of GCT paratransit service for an estimated five-year base period cost of

\$11,146,371.79, with a FY2008-09 first year cost of \$2,043,440.80.

Chair Fulton asked about the service cost of GCT's current year contract, the final year in Laidlaw/First Transit's previous contract. Mr. Rosenberg replied that the contract value was approximately \$1.58 million, excluding adjustments for ridership levels or performance penalties.

Acting General Manager Brown expressed that staff is acutely aware of the historical performance problems Laidlaw had earlier in its tenure, and that the Board has set the quality of our paratransit service as a top priority. He stated that staff feels MV Transportation provided us with the best proposal to take our service to the next level, continue making service enhancements, provide strong outreach to the community, provide a top-level maintenance program for GCT vehicles, and provide a rock-solid customer advocacy program that will reach out to users of the system to gather their input and feedback on a regular and continuous basis.

Mr. Brown emphasized MV's transition plan, detailed public outreach program, safety and training program, maintenance plan, technology experience and proposed facility location as a few areas where MV's proposal demonstrated a clear advantage over the proposal submitted by First Transit. He also mentioned that over the past several months, during the proposal process, there have been numerous service problems under Laidlaw/First Transit's management.

Public Comment

The first speaker was W.C. Pihl, Vice-President for Business Development for MV Transportation. Mr. Pihl expressed his appreciation for the opportunity to be GCT's partner in providing paratransit services, and described how seriously MV takes this project and expressed MV's willingness to start the transition activities as soon as possible.

Mr. Pihl emphasized that although MV's contract proposal is more costly than First Transit, they focused on value added improvements such as reducing turnover by increasing wages for experienced good employees as well as improved use of the technology tools used by dispatch personnel. Mr. Pihl thanked the board for the opportunity to speak.

The second speaker was Pat McNiff, Regional Vice-President for First Transit in Southern California. Mr. McNiff said he has been working with SCAT/GCT since 1994, and he recalled the first day of service with one phone and two buses. He emphasized that First Transit now picks up close to 7,500 passengers per month with zero denials, with less than one preventable accident every 200,000 miles, in well-maintained vehicles, with virtually no complaints, within the revenue constraints of the current contract. He expressed his belief that First Transit is doing a good job providing safe, reliable and cost-effective transportation.

Mr. McNiff cited information from industry publications and newspapers describing recent service problems MV has had in the Trapeze environment, including RTA Dial-A-Ride in Riverside, Handy-Ride in Fresno, and others.

Mr. McNiff asked that if MV is so confident it can operate more efficiently, why are they charging so much more to do it. He expressed his belief that it was First Transit demonstrating confidence in its ability to perform by not including additional money for potential liquidated damages, and predicted that GCT will be subsidizing MV's poor productivity. Mr. McNiff suggested that the performance issues raised in the articles he referenced might violate a requirement in GCT's proposal language. Mr. McNiff closed by asking GCT to continue its 14-year relationship with First Transit (Laidlaw) and save GCT over \$1 million over the next five years.

Director Young asked Mr. Pihl for how many agencies MV provides paratransit services. Mr. Pihl responded that they have 180 such contracts across the nation. He emphasized that a number of the incidents discussed by Mr. McNiff were discussed during the proposal interview and that GCT was encouraged to call those agencies for first-hand information.

Chair Fulton asked Mr. Mills and Mr. Brown to summarize what GCT is buying for 10% more. Mr. Mills responded that although Laidlaw/First Transit was also increasing wages in their proposal, MV will pay higher wages to both operator and maintenance personnel. He re-emphasized that MV appeared to have much better corporate support, while First Transit appeared disorganized; a key member of their team had not read the proposal.

Ms. Heath was asked to describe the reference calls she made. She talked to San Luis Obispo, San Jose, San Mateo and Santa Cruz and received positive recommendations for MV. Mr. Brown recounted reference calls he made which complimented MV on its transition activities, customer outreach and operational performance.

Chair Fulton asked if MV's location will allow for more efficient GCT oversight of the contract than First Transit's location. Mr. Brown answered in the affirmative.

Chair Fulton asked if it would be possible to hold a special Board meeting sooner than next month to ratify this decision. General Counsel Clayton responded that if the matter is urgent, a special meeting would be appropriate. Mr. Brown recommended the Board act soon if possible.

Director Young moved that the committee of the whole recommend that a special meeting be convened as soon as possible and that full Board approve staff's recommendation to authorize the General Manager to execute a contract with MV Transportation for operation of ACCESS paratransit service, subject to staff addressing some of the MV performance issues raised by First Transit at that meeting. Director DeVito seconded the motion.

Roll Call

Ayes: Chair Fulton
Director DeVito
Director Young

Noes: None
Absent: Director Flynn
Director Holden

8. **Consider Adoption of Resolution 2008-02, Authorizing Staff to Enter into a Secured Credit Facility Agreement with Santa Barbara Bank and Trust** – Steve Rosenberg, Director of Administrative Services

Director Young moved to table this item until the next meeting of the full Board. Director DeVito seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

9. **Update on Status of CNG Fueling Station Project** – Rob Lurie, Director of Fleet and Facilities

Director Young moved to recommend that the full Board receive and file this report. Director DeVito seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Information Items

- A. GCT ACCESS Service Update for January 2008 – Margaret Heath, Paratransit & Special Projects Manager
- B. GCT Fixed Route Service Update for January 2008 – Chuck McQuary, Transit Planner
- C. Personnel Changes for February 2008 – Steve Rosenberg, Director of Administrative Services

Chair Fulton adjourned the meeting in memory of John R, Linehan at 11:10 am. The next regular GCT Board of Directors meeting is scheduled for April 2, 2008 at the GCT Administrative Facility, 301 E. Third St., Oxnard.

Minutes recorded by: Steve Rosenberg, Director of Administrative Services.

Steven P. Brown
Acting General Manager/
Secretary of the Board

Bill Fulton, Chair
Board of Directors