

# San Mateo County Express Lanes Joint Powers Authority Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Meeting No. 44  
January 13, 2023

In compliance with Governor’s Executive Order N-29-20, and pursuant to the Shelter-in-Place Order issued by the San Mateo County Health Officer, this meeting was conducted via remote conferencing.

**Board of Directors:** Rico E. Medina (Chair), Alicia Aguirre (Vice Chair), Gina Papan, Emily Beach, Michael Salazar and Carlos Romero

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## 1.0 CALL TO ORDER/ ROLL CALL

Chair Rico E. Medina called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. Roll call was taken.

### **Members Present:**

C/CAG Members: Alicia Aguirre, Gina Papan, Michael Salazar

SMCTA Members: Rico E. Medina, Emily Beach, Carlos Romero

### **Members Absent:**

None.

### **Staff Present:**

Sean Charpentier – Executive Council

April Chan - Executive Council

Mima Crume – Clerk of the Board

Tim Fox – Legal Counsel

Kaki Cheung, Van Ocampo – C/CAG staff supporting SMCEL-JPA

Connie Mobley-Ritter, Robert Casumbal – SMCTA staff supporting SMCEL-JPA

Lacy Vong, Christa Cassidy, Monique Fuhrman – HNTB

Other members of staff and the public were in attendance.

## 2.0 BRIEF OVERVIEW OF TELECONFERENCE MEETING PROCEDURES

Clerk Crume gave a brief overview of the teleconference meeting procedures.

## 3.0 COVID-19 PANDEMIC STATE OF EMERGENCY

3.1 Review and approval of Resolution SMCEL 23-01 finding that, as a result of the continuing COVID-19 pandemic state of emergency declared by Governor

Newsom, meeting in person would present imminent risks to the health or safety of attendees. APPROVED

Director Romero MOVED to approve item 3.1. Director Salazar SECONDED. Roll call was taken. **MOTION CARRIED 6-0-0**

#### 4.0 PUBLIC COMMENT ON ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

*Note: Public comment is limited to two minutes per speaker.*

Clerk Crume reported that there were no public comments.

#### 5.0 APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

This item is to set the final consent and regular agenda, and to approve the items listed on the consent agenda. All items on the consent agenda are approved by one action. There will be no separate discussion on these items unless members of the Board, staff or public request specific items to be removed for separate action.

5.1 Approval of the minutes of Board of Directors regular business meeting No. 43 dated December 9, 2022. APPROVED

5.2 Accept the Sources and Uses of Funds for the FY23 Period Ending November 30, 2022. APPROVED

Director Aguirre MOVED to approve the consent agenda items 5.1 and 5.2. Director Salazar SECONDED. Roll call was taken. **MOTION CARRIED 6-0-0**

#### 6.0 REGULAR AGENDA

6.1 Approval of Resolution SMCEL 23-02 on the Amendment of the Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 SMCEL-JPA Revised Budget. APPROVED

Chair Medina continued the discussion on Item 6.1 to the February Board meeting due to staff emergency.

6.2 Receive a presentation on the status of the outstanding 2020 Variable Rate Demand Bonds used to fund a portion of the SMCEL-JPA Express Lanes project. INFORMATION

The Board received a presentation on the status of the outstanding 2020 Variable Rate Demand Bonds used to fund a portion of the SMCEL-JPA Express Lanes project. Although inflation is at its highest level, CPI has dropped. Federal Reserve Board is expected to further raise interest rate in the coming year. US Treasury yields is at a high level. The Board will be kept informed with any issues. As of November 30<sup>th</sup>, of the \$6M in bond proceeds designated to cover interest, \$1.6M has been spent to date, leaving \$4.4M. It is expected that that the \$4.4M of fund balance will last through calendar year 2023.

Board of Director Romero suggests presenting the data in a pie chart format to understand the burn rate of the capitalized interest fund. Connie will add a graph next time to show more details.

Board of Director Beach asked to remind the Board when the bond started. Connie responded September 2020.

Director Papan asked how long would it take for the JPA to develop its own bond rating.

Connie responded that it would require a fully operational corridor and a steady earning stream.

- 6.3 Receive update on the US 101 Express Lanes operations from Whipple Ave. to the San Mateo /Santa Clara County line. INFORMATION

The Board received a presentation update on the US 101 Express Lanes operations from Whipple Ave. to the San Mateo /Santa Clara County line.

Director Papan asked if the incidents are being closely monitored and how a driver would learn about incidents on the corridor.

Lacy responded that BAIFA has a 511 regional operational center, which monitor incidents and its impacts on a daily basis. The variable message signs are the best way of communicating with the drivers..

Vice Chair Aguirre asked where the clipper cards from the Community Transportation Benefits program are being distributed to and whether it is still mostly north county recipients.

Lacy said that the project team is seeing a more even distribution.

Vice Chair Aguirre requested a breakdown of program participants.

Director Papan asked if the team has reached to the service unions.

Lacy said not yet, but will do a follow-up with the service unions.

Director Romero is interested in learning more about the participating core agencies.

Director Beach commented that in next version of the Community Transportation Benefits program, the team can go beyond the core service agencies to distribute the benefits.

Public Member Hedges commented with the 580 program, he has volunteered with MTC and reached out to the service unions and labor councils. Mr. Hedges would be happy to volunteer to help and get the word out. He added that he hopes to make the sign up process convenient and easy for the users.

- 6.4 Receive an update on the opening of the US 101 Express Lane northern segment and a presentation on the public education campaign. INFORMATION

The Board received an update on the opening of the US 101 Express Lane northern segment. The constant rain has hampered the ability of the contractor to complete the remaining field work necessary to begin the end-to-end testing. A key activity is the site commissioning task, which is when zones or blocks of the tolling equipment are tested and calibrated. By the end of the month, the project team expects to complete site commissioning work and start the end-to-end testing. Staff will be able to provide updated and more detailed opening estimate in early February.

Director Papan commented that some of our brand-new lanes have potholes.

Sean has reported the concern to Caltrans. He added that some of the lanes are net new construction and some were overlays. Caltrans is aware of the situation and has informed their maintenance team.

The Board received a presentation update on the 101 Express Lanes public education campaign. Commence tolling on northern segment will be early 2023. The public outreach team aims to launching an awareness campaign two weeks prior to opening. Digital billboards will be installed along the 101 corridor, ads will be broadcasted on radio, gas station ads and multi-lingual media. They have used the same creatives that MTC has shared with them in the 880 and 680 campaign.

Vice Chair Aguirre commented that images on the collateral should represent the diverse county. Chair Medina concurs.

Director Papan commented on the word Flex. She thinks it may take time to educate people on the word "Flex." Director Romero agrees with Director Papan.

Director Salazar commented that he likes the concept but the use of the word Flex may not capture the essence. He suggests maybe to explore it little more so when people see it, they'll know this is about express lanes and that there is a new Fastrak version. He also commented that billboards should not have small writing.

Director Beach asked when these graphics are finalized, could these be uploaded into our website. She has added, if the team needs help amplifying the message on Board members' social channels, it would be great if marketing team could send them the social media posts in different languages.

Public Member Hedges commented that it is important to highlight that customers can lower costs with Flex. That would be an important message to people who are on a budget.

## 7.0 REPORTS

### a) Chairperson Report.

Chair Medina welcomed Directors Romero, Salazar and Papan to the Board. He has added that he and Sean Charpentier was on a Zoom call with a CEO in Foster City last month, who had keen interests on the Express Lanes.

### b) Member Communication.

None.

### c) Executive Council Report - Executive Council Verbal Report.

Sean Charpentier welcomed the new Board of Directs. He reiterated that there are a lot of interests in the equity program. He would be presenting an overview of the equity program at a webinar to LA Metro.

April Chan welcomed the new Directors to the Board. She has introduced interim CFO Kathleen Kelly. Grace Martinez who was acting CFO has moved on to MTC. Kathleen will be helping through the next budget cycle.

### d) Policy/Program Manager Report.

Lacy Vong reported on the equity program, they are in the first initial phase, and they are planning on doing an evaluation of the program in terms of administration and benefits. That will happen after a year of the program. As a reminder, the team is in the middle of doing additional marketing to CBOs. Late summer or early fall, the Board should get a report on the evaluation and recommendation for future changes. Last month, the PPM team has reported on the CHP contract amendment. She has reported that there will be a training and a meeting with CHP next week in preparation for the opening of the northern segment.

## 8.0 WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

None.

## 9.0 NEXT REGULAR MEETING

February 10, 2023

## 10.0 ADJOURNMENT – 10:12 a.m.