



RTA BOARD AGENDA

***** VIA TELECONFERENCE *****

Wednesday, April 1, 2020 at 9:45 AM (after SLOCOG Board meeting adjourns)
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS' CHAMBERS
COUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER
1055 Monterey Street, San Luis Obispo, California 93401

The *AGENDA* is available/posted at: <http://www.slorta.org>

**President: Fred Strong
Peschong**

Vice President: John

Board Members:

John Peschong (First District – SLO County)
Bruce Gibson (Second District – SLO County)
Adam Hill (Third District – SLO County)
Lynn Compton (Fourth District – SLO County)
Debbie Arnold (Fifth District – SLO County)
Jimmy Paulding (Arroyo Grande)

Heather Moreno (Atascadero)
Karen Bright (Grover Beach)
Robert Davis (Morro Bay)
Fred Strong (Paso Robles)
Ed Waage (Pismo Beach)
Andy Pease (San Luis Obispo)

Individuals wishing accessibility accommodations at this meeting under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) may request such accommodations to aid hearing, visual, or mobility impairment (including Limited English Proficiency [LEP]) by contacting the RTA offices at 781-4833. Please note that 48 hours advance notice will be necessary to honor a request.

Important Notice Regarding COVID-19

Due to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) and in accordance with the Governor's Executive Order N-29-20 relating to the convening of public meetings, **the RTA Board will still hold the April 1, 2020 meeting and will be conducted via teleconference. However, at this time, the meeting will be closed to members of the public and non-essential RTA staff. Below are instructions for the public on how to view the meeting remotely and how to leave public comments.**

Members of the public are encouraged to participate & provide comments in the following ways:

- 1. Remote Viewing** – Watch the meeting by viewing a livestream online (on your home/office computer or mobile device) at <https://cal-span.org/unipage/?site=slo-span&owner=SLOCOG-SLORTA&date=2020-04-01>
Or watch on **Cable TV Public Access Channel 21.**
- 2. Public Comments** – The RTA Board will still be accepting general public comments for items not on the April agenda, as well as public comments on specific items in the agenda. Public members can submit comments by:

- **Phone – Verbal Public Comments – Call: (805) 781-4833** – State and spell your name, state the agenda item number you are calling about and leave your comment/s. **Verbal comments must be received no later than 9:45 a.m. on April 1, 2020** (the day of the meeting) and will be limited to **three (3) minutes**. Every effort will be made to include your comments into the record but due to time limitations, some comments may not be included,
- **Email – Written Public Comments – Email to: info@slorta.org** – Public comments (on any agenda item or on any item of interest not on the agenda within the jurisdiction of the RTA Board) can be submitted via email no later than **5:00 p.m. on Monday, March 30, 2020**.
- **Mail – Written Public Comments** – Public comments (on any agenda item or on any item of interest not on the agenda within the jurisdiction of the RTA Board) can be submitted by mail. **Public Comments by mail must be received by RTA no later than 5:00 p.m. on Monday, March 30, 2020.**

Mail to:

Clerk of the Board
SLO RTA
179 Cross Street
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

*****Note:** Every effort will be made to include your comments into the record, but due to time limitations, some comments may not be included

CALL MEETING TO ORDER, ROLL CALL

PUBLIC COMMENT: The Board reserves this portion of the agenda for members of the public to address the San Luis Obispo Regional Transit Authority Board on any items not on the agenda and within the jurisdiction of the Board. Comments are limited to three minutes per speaker. The Board will listen to all communication, but in compliance with the Brown Act, will not take any action on items that are not on the agenda.

A. CLOSED SESSION: CONFERENCE WITH LABOR NEGOTIATOR (Government Code section 54957.6.) It is the intention of the Board to meet in closed session to have a conference with its Labor Negotiator, Geoff Straw, concerning the following employee organization: Teamsters Local 986

B. INFORMATION AGENDA – No information items

C. ACTION AGENDA

C-1 PUBLIC HEARING: Resolution to Declare COVID-19 Fiscal Emergency (Approve)

D. CONSENT AGENDA – No information items

E. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Next RTA Board meetings:

1. April 29, 2020: Meeting to consider public comments on COVID-19 Fiscal Emergency
2. May 6, 2020: Regularly scheduled meeting

SAN LUIS OBISPO REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY

APRIL 1, 2020

STAFF REPORT

AGENDA ITEM:

C-1

TOPIC:

**Resolution to Declare COVID-19 Fiscal
Emergency**

PRESENTED BY:

Geoff Straw

A.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

- 1. Conduct Public Hearing regarding the declaration of a fiscal emergency and set a further hearing to be held within 30 days as required by Public Resources Code section 21080.32; and**
- 2. Adopt Resolution declaring a present fiscal emergency for the agency caused by the failure of agency revenues to adequately fund agency programs and facilities; enabling the implementation of emergency service reductions; delegating to the Executive Director and/or his designates authority to take action to expend RTA resources and make expenditures; and provide purchasing authority to the Executive Director and/or his designee up to \$250,000 to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.**

SUMMARY:

Currently, there is a fiscal crisis in that the RTA the RTA will see a reduction in fare revenue from the loss of ridership over the past few weeks, as well as due to the March 23rd suspension of fares due to the fiscal impact of the COVID 19 pandemic. Many directly related expenses may be reimbursable from the Federal Transit Administration or FEMA during this state of emergency, the extent of which is unknown at this time. The RTA is tracking expenditures and staff time responding to this public health crisis so that the agency is eligible for reimbursement.

It is unknown how long this current fiscal emergency will be in effect for the RTA and the services we administer. Because there is up to a 9 month lag time in receipt of state and federal revenues, the RTA will likely feel the fiscal impact for at least the next 9 months and beyond.

BACKGROUND:

Adopting the resolution by your Board allows the RTA to begin implementing service reductions (to be implemented as needed as conditions warrant) and accompanying

reductions in force due to illness, illness of a family member, or to care for children under age 13 due to school closures.

Additionally, the resolution authorizes the Executive Director and/or his designee (should the Executive Director fall ill) up to \$250,000 (the current purchasing authority is \$30,000) to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and to take such other actions that may extend beyond existing authority.

DISCUSSION:

Local, state and national leaders have declared a state of emergency regarding the COVID-19 global pandemic. The San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors has further directed residents to shelter in place and eliminate non-essential travel. Public transportation is considered an essential service and will continue to provide service to our residents with available resources.

RTA leadership and employees are diligently working on actions and plans that will allow the RTA and those transit systems directly operated or administered transit by the RTA to meet community needs for transportation to jobs, health care facilities, and to visit loved ones in a manner that limits exposure to COVID-19 to our employees and customers.

The Executive Director has formed a COVID-19 response team to plan for and address multiple outcome scenarios. The COVID-19 team will plan for communications with local public safety and health officials so that the RTA can coordinate services and support the communities we serve. We are in regular contact with Teamsters leadership to keep them informed on any decisions that may affect working conditions. We are following the Centers for Disease Control and World Health Organization best practices to implement safety and service protocols, and our staff can expect to see new operating practices and procedures go into place over the coming days and weeks as we learn more about the local impacts of the pandemic.

As of March 24th, the RTA has taken the following actions to address local impacts of the pandemic:

1. Communications: Press Releases, Internal Communications, Interior Notices on LCD screens, Social Media posting, and posters at high-use bus stops
2. Health and Safety:
 - a. Directed employees over the age of 65 to adhere to the Governor's March 15th order to stay home, as well as those with known immunodeficiency issues. This has affected 24 current employees at the RTA and SoCo Transit, and has forced our two agencies to reduce weekday service to Saturday levels (with an overlay of commuter Express services on the RTA) beginning March 16th.

- b. Supplied additional hand sanitizer and gloves for RTA employees and posted hand washing reminders and CDC information on our buses and website.
 - c. Refocused bus washing to increase to a minimum of daily bus interior cleaning instead of weekly. Bus Operators are provided sanitizing wipes for employee shift changes on the buses during each service day.
 - d. Temporarily placed Bus Operator and rider porta-johns at Government Center and Pismo Outlets transfer stations. All four units have hand wash stations inside; rider units are locked at the end of each service day.
 - e. Suspended fares on all buses and directed ambulatory riders to use rear door on those buses so equipped to minimize interactions with Bus Operators on March 23rd.
3. COVID-19 Response Team: Formed a response team and assigned areas of responsibility, and activated the Incident Command Structure.

As part of this pandemic emergency, the RTA must institute additional service reductions as necessary to match staffing levels to those who are healthy and able to work.

As a public agency under the Public Utilities Code, the RTA is exempted from California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) regulations regarding projects that would have a significant effect on the environment under fiscal emergencies. As part of the exemption procedure as approved by the legislature and governor in 1996 (SB 1899 Alquist) as codified as Section 21080.32 of the Public Resources Code, your Board must adopt by resolution a declaration of fiscal emergency which has been caused by the failure of agency revenues to adequately fund agency programs.

This resolution signals that the RTA is planning for local impacts from the global COVID-19 pandemic and that there is presently a fiscal emergency. After the fiscal emergency public hearing, your Board will have 30 days in which to respond to suggestions made by the public at the hearing. Beyond this process, there is no additional CEQA documentation required of a public transit agency in its declaration of a fiscal emergency and the resulting reductions in service.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment 1: Declaration of Fiscal Emergency Response to COVID-19 Pandemic

Staff Recommendation

1. Conduct Public Hearing regarding the declaration of a fiscal emergency, and set a further hearing to be held within 30 days as required by Public Resources Code section 21080.32; and
2. Adopt Resolution 2020-18 declaring a fiscal emergency for the agency, enabling the implementation of emergency service reductions, delegating to the Executive Director and/or his designates authority to take action to expend RTA resources and make expenditures, and provide purchasing authority to the Executive Director and/or his designee up to \$250,000 to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.

**SAN LUIS OBISPO REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY
RESOLUTION NO. 20-____**

**RESOLUTION DECLARING A FISCAL EMERGENCY
DUE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

WHEREAS, a novel coronavirus (COVID-19) was first detected in Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China, in December 2019 and has spread throughout the world and the United States at alarming rates; and

WHEREAS, the World Health Organization has declared the spread of the novel coronavirus a pandemic; and

WHEREAS, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) considers the virus to be a very serious public health threat, based on current information; and

WHEREAS, an emergency has been declared by the President of the United States, Governor of California, and the San Luis Obispo County Office of Emergency Services; and

WHEREAS, on Wednesday, March 18, 2020 the Emergency Services Director for San Luis Obispo County issued a Shelter at Home Order for the County of San Luis Obispo, which took effect on Thursday, March 19, 2020 at 5:00 pm; and

WHEREAS, on Thursday, March 19, 2020, California Governor Gavin Newsom signed an Executive Order to Stay Home Except for Essential Needs for all of California; and

WHEREAS, rapidly changing conditions necessitate reductions in public transportation services due to illness among Bus Operators and Technicians; and

WHEREAS, there presently exists a fiscal emergency in that the RTA is experiencing a reduction in fare revenue from the loss of ridership over the past few weeks and suspension of fares effective March 23, 2010 due to the fiscal and health impacts of the COVID 19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, these current emergency conditions require greater flexibility to respond to the pandemic, including increased purchasing authority of the Executive Director and/or his designee.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Directors of the San Luis Obispo Regional Transit Authority hereby adopts the findings set forth in the Recitals above; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Directors of the San Luis Obispo Regional Transit Authority declares a Fiscal Emergency effective April 1, 2020, and authorizes the Executive Director and/or his designee to begin emergency bus service reductions as may be necessary to respond to the current fiscal emergency;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Directors hereby authorizes the Executive Director and/or his designee to take all actions necessary to protect RTA employees and the public from this health and fiscal emergency;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Directors of the San Luis Obispo Regional Transit Authority authorizes emergency purchases of up to \$250,000 by the authority of the Executive Director and/or his designee to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Directors of the San Luis Obispo Regional Transit Authority set a further hearing to respond to suggestions made by the public at the April 1, 2020 public meeting within 30 days from April 1, 2020.in accordance with Public Resources Code §21080.32.

On a motion of Director _____, seconded by Director _____, and on the following roll call, to wit: the foregoing resolution is hereby passed and adopted by the San Luis Obispo Regional Transit Authority of San Luis Obispo County, State of California, at a regular meeting of said Board of Directors held on the 1st day of April 2020.

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTAINING:

Fred Strong
RTA Board President

ATTEST:

Geoff Straw
RTA Executive Director

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND LEGAL EFFECT:

Rita L. Neal
County Counsel

By: _____
Nina Negranti
RTA Counsel

Dated: _____
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