



**Special Needs Advisory Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
April 27, 2010  
1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.  
Orange County Transportation Authority  
600 S. Main Street, Orange, CA  
Conference Room 154**

**Members Present**

Noel Burcelis, <i>Helping Hands for Better Living</i>	Henry Michaels, <i>California Elwyn</i>
Diana Burkhardt, <i>Braille Institute</i>	Paul Miller, <i>California State, Fullerton</i>
Patricia Estrella, <i>City of Tustin</i>	Charles Mitchell, <i>American Legion</i>
Penny Hinds, <i>Circle of Friends</i>	Ronald Salda, <i>Hall Family Home, LLC</i>
Madeline Jensen, <i>Office on Aging, Santa Ana</i>	Ellen Schenk, <i>Sr. Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor</i>
Sue Lau, <i>Polio Survivors Plus (AARP)</i>	Denise Simpson, <i>N.O.C. Community College District</i>
Elizabeth Lee, <i>Alzheimer's Family Services</i>	Mallory Vega, <i>Acacia Adult Day Services</i>
Pethuru Lourthu, <i>Westview Services, Inc.</i>	Denise Welch, <i>South County Seniors Services</i>
Sylvia Mann, <i>Orange County Office on Aging</i>	Janis White, <i>RCOC</i>
Kathryn McCullough, <i>Lake Forest City Council</i>	Gary Wisser, <i>Vocational Visions</i>

**Members Absent**

Tabitha Evans, <i>Multiple Sclerosis Society</i>	Sue Ray, <i>City of Anaheim Council Services</i>
Alice Grant, <i>Community Organizations of Anaheim</i>	Bob Tiezzi, <i>OCARC Intake Coordinator</i>
Carol Kawanami, <i>Braille Institute</i>	Bill Turner, <i>Demiurgic Living Solutions</i>
Bobby Menn, <i>W.C.A.R.E., Saddleback USD</i>	Dick Waltz, <i>Fullerton Senior Citizens</i>
Judi Murray, <i>Program Director, Nursing Facility</i>	Minaya Wright, <i>Integrity House</i>
Jane Neglia, <i>Dayle McIntosh Center</i>	

**1. Call to Order/Welcome**

Chair Mallory Vega called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**2. Self-Introductions: Name and Organization**

Everyone introduced themselves around the table.

**3. Pledge of Allegiance**

Kathryn McCullough led the pledge of allegiance.

**4. Approval of Minutes**

Chair Mallory Vega asked if there were any additions or corrections to the January 26, 2010 Special Needs Advisory Committee (SNAC) Meeting Minutes. A

motion was made seconded to approve the January 26, 2010 meeting minutes as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

## **5. Chair's Report**

### **6. ACCESS Driver Exceptional Service Awards**

Chair Vega presented ACCESS Driver Exception Service Awards to three ACCESS drivers: Yassir Mohamed, who works for American Logistics, Armila Tavera and Michael Trimpey who both work for Veolia.

### **7. ARTIC**

Jamie Lai, Transit Manager, City of Anaheim, gave an overview of the Anaheim Regional Transportation Intermodal Center (ARTIC). ARTIC is a partnership between the city of Anaheim and OCTA for a new major transportation center. ARTIC will serve as a hub for Orange County and the region, a landmark where freeways, major arterials, bus routes and Orange County's rail transit system will converge. ARTIC will accommodate these services as well as plans for future high speed rail trains.

As part of the development around ARTIC, Ms. Lai talked about the Platinum Triangle which will provide a mixed-use of residential units, commercial space and office space.

She also spoke about Aconnect a new web site debuting this summer. It will provide consumers with complete transportation information and service. It will allow consumers to get transportation schedules, buy tickets and get system-wide information and updates on Anaheim Rapid Connection (ARC) and high-speed rail, and ARTIC.

Several participants asked about parking at the ARTIC transportation hub with issues ranging from fees for parking, overnight parking, and structure parking. Ms. Lai said all of these matters were being looked at and were being taken into consideration as plans move forward with the environmental phase of ARTIC.

### **8. June 2010 Service Change**

Gordon Robinson, Project Manager Service Planning introduced himself and Edmund Buckley, Section Manager Transit. Mr. Robinson gave a brief synopsis of the March 2010 Bus Service Change, stating that 150,000 bus revenue hours were eliminated due to funding and revenue shortfalls – the largest in OCTA's history. He said that due to the service change OCTA is currently looking at overloads, passbys, service running late, on-time performance and schedule adherence. ACCESS service has not been affected too much and Mr. Robinson said that OCTA is currently collecting same day taxi program information to monitor affected areas in the county, particularly areas in south Orange County.

Mr. Robinson stated that a system-wide transit study is being launch in May that will evaluate OCTA's system to make it more efficient and provide better services to

OCTA's customers. He then turned the meeting over to Edmund Buckley, Section Manager Transit, to provide an overview of the June 2010 Bus Service Change.

Mr. Buckley announced that the June 2010 Bus Service Change is going to be small. He said efficiencies would be improved by adding some bus stops and making some minor trip time adjustments.

Chair Vega then asked Curt Burlingame, Section Manager Transit, for any follow up to what Mr. Robinson and Mr. Buckley had presented about the June 2010 Bus Service Change.

Mr. Burlingame indicated to the committee that OCTA staff has been looking at ways to make ACCESS more efficient and cost effective without sacrificing service quality. He stated that staff has been having discussions with Veolia on a taxi pilot program. He also said the current Veolia contract allows Veolia to enter into a subcontract with a provider to provide taxi service. This taxi service provider is American Logistics. Currently, Veolia is sending approximately 300 trips a day to American Logistics for ACCESS service. American Logistics provides its own drivers and vehicles.

Mr. Burlingame explained that with the pilot program all trips for ACCESS that run on Saturday and Sunday will now be through American Logistics. He also indicated that ACCESS night time service will also be through American Logistics and would be from 6 p.m. to 6 a.m., Monday through Friday. Day time ACCESS from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. will continue to be with Veolia drives and OCTA buses. The pilot program will begin July 1, 2010 and run for approximately 90 days. He said that by utilizing these resources this could potentially provide considerable cost savings to OCTA. He emphasized that OCTA staff along with Veolia and American Logistics will be carefully analyzing the program to determine if it will be expanded upon in the future. He then asked the committee for comments and questions.

A few committee members expressed concerns about safety issues. One member said that he had parents that fear the safety of their daughter in a van by herself and whether the driver was male or female. The member also spoke about possible gross misconduct and whether or not it could be monitored since the likelihood there would not be cameras like there are on ACCESS buses. The member felt that quality control would severely decline. Another member said that her city provides her free taxi service, but that she does not use it because she has safety concerns such as intoxication issues with drivers, drivers insisting on smoking in the cab, cab door malfunctions and cab driver driving errors. One committee member felt that it would be important to know what the background process of the American Logistics subcontractors is. Mr. Burlingame replied that the subcontractors have to have the same Department of Justice background check as Veolia drivers.

Mr. Burlingame reiterated that safety issues will be closely monitored along with driver training and vehicle identification.

Another miscellaneous issue that members voiced concerned about was sensitivity training. A committee member relayed a story in which a taxi driver dropped off one of his profoundly retarded patients at a wrong facility and simply left without checking to see if it was the right one, so the member then asked how American Logistics drivers were going to communicate with patients with severe disabilities. Another committee member asked if American Logistics drivers would be easily recognized. Her daughter has curb to door service and sometimes drivers are in t-shirts and other times in dress shirts, so it has been confusing to not have consistent identification for her daughter to recognize. She said it was always easy with ACCESS since the drivers always wore the same shirt. She asked if the cabs would always be the same color or always have the same sign. The committee member suggested magnetic cab stickers as an option. Another committee member suggested that a standard shirt be issued for the drivers to wear.

Chair Vega, asked Mr. Burlingame if the introduction of the pilot program was going to be presented at the ACCESS Roundtable following the Special Needs in Transit Committee (SNAC) meeting for the ACCESS Roundtable's feedback or if the SNAC would have another opportunity to provide additional feedback on the pilot program. He replied that he would like to get all of the SNAC information at today's meeting so he could have it before June's service change.

Mr. Burlingame encouraged the committee members to utilize the Customer Relations Department during the pilot program if there are issues. He emphasized that the pilot program is going to be more than just a taxi service. It will be extremely important for Customer Relations to be contacted so that every complaint, comment or compliment can be documented. He explained that once it goes through the Customer Relations Department, it goes to an OCTA staff member for response. He also pointed out that it is the responsibility of Veolia to respond to the comment initially and that they are given five days to respond. OCTA staff then reviews the comment to see if Veolia has done their due diligence.

At this point in the meeting, Ellen Burton, Executive Director External Affairs suggested that an ad hoc subcommittee be formed prior to the implementation of the pilot program to brainstorm some ideas of how to communicate with the customers and to make sure that OCTA is hearing more in depth what the issues and concerns are. She then asked the Chair if this was something the committee would consider and then reconvene the ad hoc subcommittee after the implementation of the pilot program to discuss what worked and to see where it can be improved. A motion was made by the Chair, seconded, and passed unanimously.

## **9. Long Range Transportation Plan Update**

Greg Nord, Transportation Analyst, Development provided an overview of the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), which is a visionary document that provides the strategies that guide investments for the next 25 years on multi-modal transportation

needs in Orange County. Within the next two months a closer look will be taken to Orange County's freeways and arterial system. The 2010 LRTP Goals include: expanding transportation system choice, improving transportation system performance and ensuring sustainability.

#### **10. Members' Organizational Affiliations**

Ronald Salda, CFO Administrator, from Hall Family Homes, LLC, talked about his organization which provides 8 homes in Orange and Los Angeles counties for emotionally/developmentally challenged young adults and how its goal is to make life better for these young adults in an environment in which they can thrive.

#### **11. Update Reports**

##### Eligibility Update

There was no eligibility update.

Gracie Davis, Section Supervisor Transit, introduced Michael Castillo, Mobility Management Program Supervisor, from the Dayle McIntosh Center. Mr. Castillo manages the Mobility Management Program (MMP) which provides transportation services for persons with disabilities and low income individuals in Orange County.

The MMP:

- provides customized trip planning assistance for riders
- provides companion and personalized travel training for new riders who are apprehensive or have special needs
- acts as a centralized transportation resource for Orange County

Ms. Davis encouraged committee members to take advantage of this service because the program is funded through monies received from federal and state funds since OCTA had to discontinue its travel/training program due to limited service.

##### Office on Aging Update

Sylvia Mann, Orange County Office on Aging, provided an update on the Senior Non-emergency Medical Transportation program and indicated that it is 100 percent full. She said the needs continue to keep going up, adding that they are grateful for the new Freedom Funds, which are helping the older adults. Ms. Mann said that contracts are up for renewal on July 1.

#### **12. Public Comments**

A committee member indicated that he has been pushing his clients to use fixed-route services, but that many of them are having difficulty when using OCTA's on-line trip planner. For example, when inputting a route and/or the same trip, the computer generates random times (i.e. the computer will indicate that the trip will take 12 minutes, and other times it will state the trip will take 1 hour and 13 minutes). Mr. Perry replied that he would have OCTA's webmaster and staff look into this issue and check for other outlying issues as well.

Another committee complimented OCTA on providing great ACCESS service within the developmentally-challenged community despite the rearranging of schedules and the cutting back of service.

**13. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 2:45 p.m.