

# Trans ACT

## Transit Advisory Committee Training

### ACCESS Committee Member's Handbook

SunLine Transit Agency  
and  
Crain & Associates, Inc.

1995

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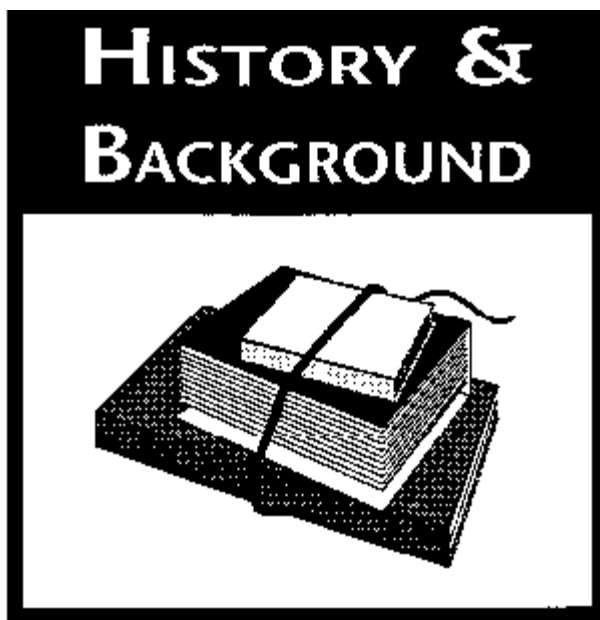
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## History and Background

### **September 11, 1977**

SunLine starts operations with 10 buses acquired from the City of Palm Springs. Twelve additional buses were acquired soon after that same year. SunLine's first annual budget was under \$2,000,000.

SunLine operates out of the Palm Springs City yard with an office trailer and one service bay.

Cities participating in the Joint Powers Authority which operates agency are: Palm Springs, Desert Hot Springs, Palm Desert, Indio and Coachella.

### **1978**

After SunLine's first nine months of service, 500,060 passengers have been carried.

### **1979**

SunLine negotiates to acquire 12 transit coaches from Washington, DC Metro at a cost of approximately \$900 each. These replace the original coaches from the City of Palm Springs.

### **1980**

SunLine offers a \$500 prize to art Design. The term SunBus is a part of the new yellow and green color scheme.

Demand response service was initiated.

Rancho Mirage joins JPA.

### **1981**

SunLine offers its first bus pass for a monthly fee of \$25 and begins looking for a site to house the growing agency. The agency buys its first computer and approves purchase of its first brand new buses.

### **1982**

SunLine implements zone fare structure. Monthly pass is continued and a new Handy Ten pass book and Day Pass are started.

On-board advertising is started, the decision is made by the board not to allow exterior bus advertising.

SunLine takes over operation of the Palm Springs SunSurrey, changes the name to Sun Special.

### **1983**

Consolidation of elderly and handicapped service begun. Applications for funds to provide vehicles for this service are submitted.

## **1984**

Two trailers are purchased to house agency (at less than \$30,000). New property for facility is acquired in Thousand Palms.

La Quinta and Cathedral City join the Joint Powers Authority that operates SunLine Transit.

Road leading to the Thousand Palms facility is named, Harry Oliver Trail.

SunLine buys six used Flxibles for under \$18,000. New bus stop signs are designed.

## **1985**

The first board meeting is at the new Thousand Palms property in February. Two lift-equipped vans are purchased. Three Flxible buses are purchased.

## **1986**

Maintenance facility is completed. Bus benches begin to be added to SunBus stops. SunLine holds its first SunBus "Roadeo" for its personnel, it is won by Dave McFall.

Additional service to Coachella and Indio launched with Line 5.

## **1987**

SunLine launches first summer "Go Pass" youth program. Free Saturday and Sunday service from seniors and disabled has trial run during August and September.

Agreement with Sunrise Media is reached to provide bus shelters with advertising throughout the valley. Charles Flitcraft is 1987 "Roadeo" winner.

## **1988**

Banning Express service launched on a trial basis. Indian Wells becomes a member of the SunLine JPA.

SunBus "Roadeo" 1988 is held, winner is Richard Samuels.

## **1989**

Banning Express, East Valley express and Coachella Express are all discontinued. A new bus stop design is adopted. Another modular building is brought onto property for employee lounge. Double decker service (Sun Special) is discontinued.

SunLine begins to produce Rider's Guide in-house with its own desk-top publishing system.

SunLine launches Clean Air Pass, an employer pass distribution program.

## **1990**

Richard Cromwell III becomes General

Manager after resignation of founding General Manager, Lee Norwine. The first agency marketing plan is implemented.

A new modular structure is procured to house an employee locker room.

SunLine begins cooperative program with Commuter Transportation Services to provide ridesharing and alternate mode transportation outreach to valley employers.

SunLine hosts the California Transit Agency's 25th Annual Convention in Palm Springs. Charles Flitcraft is 1990 "Roadeo" winner.

## **1991**

Vans are provided for supervisors to work new "on the street" supervision. SunLine forms new JPA to handle Coachella Valley taxicab regulation.

Demand response service is contracted to private provider and the name "SunDial" is adopted for program.

Study begins on alternate fuel buses for potential replacement of bus fleet now totaling 40 buses. Buses begin carrying larger percentage of school children with transportation funding cutbacks to schools.

. Robert Uristegui is 1991 "Roadeo" winner.

## **1992**

"CNG Project" launched to procure new bus fleet through grants and other funding. Partnerships with Southern California Gas Company and the College of the Desert are formed to facilitate this shift.

Another modular is added to SunLine facility to house marketing and other staff. Twelve new SunDial vans are introduced.;

Fifteenth anniversary marks a ridership total of 18,764,699 riders.

## **1993**

Trial bike racks installed on eight SunBuses. SunLine begins new graffiti program in Thousand Palms, Thermal, and Mecca.

New public CNG station is built at SunLine. SunLine orders its new CNG buses from Orion and EIDorado. An experimental Detroit Diesel CNG engine is installed on Gillig bus #1 477 for testing.

New logo and color scheme adopted by agency. SunLine initiates pass sales outlet program at eight sites around the Coachella Valley.

SunLine hosts "Clean Across America" for its stop in the Coachella Valley. Sixteen vehicles refuel and drivers have a "pit stop" in their trek across the United States. T. Boone Pickens presents the official thank you to SunLine.

Routes are changed to "pulse system". Entire system overhaul allows agency to come in within budget for the year after funding decreases.

## **1994**

Thirty nine new CNG buses roll into service on May 9th. A Clean Air Fair is held to celebrate the new fleet with an attendance of approximately 2,000 people.

CNG Fueling is made available to other cities by using a mobile refueling Trenfuels truck. The first city to get this is Desert Hot Springs. Agency gets new electronic fareboxes which will collect data automatically.

Four TransAction Network locations are launched in shopping areas across the valley for riders to access schedule and rideshare information from touchscreen kiosks. \$1000 scholarship is awarded to Rudy Mejia, a local high school student who wins the contest to design the new children's activity book.

SunLine opens its new Indio facility as a transfer point, bus storage & maintenance yard and the new home of SunDial. This will become the Clean Air Center, with a conversion company working on the site to convert vehicles to CNG.

New Northshore Roadrunner begins service, a joint effort of SunLine and the local community there. All twenty eight people in

maintenance complete CNG certification at College of the Desert. Agency adds a modular building for farebox repair and maintenance. Charles Richard "Dick" Payne is named Cabassador of the Year.

SunBus is featured as clean transportation to and around The Skins Game on national television. SunLine receives California Community College Economic Development Network (ED>Net) Chancellor's Award for 1994.

## **1995**

The first 'painted bus" is launched - a joint effort of the Living Desert, American Express, and SunLine. The design is created by a scholarship winner from South America.

SunLine acquires two new modular buildings for storage and property maintenance. SunLine participates in Department of Energy Road Rally and places second in Long Beach.

The new SunGas station at the Palm Springs Regional Airport is launched, making the sixth outlet where vehicles can be refueled. SunLine receives federal appropriation of almost \$1 million dollars for five more gas stations in the valley.

SunLine wins California Association of Local Economic Development (CALED) award for "New Technology Fuels Jobs and Partnerships" project. Also wins Clean Air Award for Innovative Transportation Project from the South Coast Air Quality

Management District (SCAOMD).

*...To Be Continued*

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## ***Sample Bylaws***

- Tri-City Transit Advisory Committee
- AC Transit Accessibility Advisory Committee
- HARTline Consumer Advisory Committee
- Sacramento Regional Transit Disabled & Elderly Committee for Accessible Transportation

**RULES AND REGULATIONS OF THE**

**TRI-CITY TRANSIT ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

## **Article I - General**

The Committee is established pursuant to Section 2-3103 of the Fremont Municipal Code.

## **Article II - Committee Structure and Terms of Office**

The Committee consists of eight (8) members and four (4) alternates; four members and two alternates are appointed by the Fremont City Council; two members and one alternate are appointed by the Newark City Council; and two members and one alternate are appointed by the Union City Council. Fremont members appointed to four year terms; Newark members one year; Union City two years. Fremont Committee members may be reappointed to serve two full terms, or, if initially appointed to fill an unexpired term, may be appointed to two additional terms. Newark and Union City members serve at the pleasure of their respective City Councils.

## **Article III - Committee Duties**

A. The Committee members will provide input and advice to their respective City Councils and/or Transportation Committees on transportation issues important to those organizations. The Committee will consider transportation issues as directed by their respective City Councils and/or Transportation committees or review transportation issues which the Committee considers significant. Staff support, as necessary, including staff reports, agendas, minutes, resolutions, etc., will be provided to the Committee at the direction of the Fremont City Manager.

### **B. Paratransit Related Issues:**

1. Fremont, Newark, and Union City members will meet to consider paratransit issues.

2. The role of the Committee in the area of paratransit shall be as follows:

- To work with City staff in ascertaining paratransit needs in the Tri-City area.
- To assist City staff in the development of program evaluation.
- To make recommendations to staff and Council concerning program goals and objectives.
- To review and make recommendations to respective City Councils on the annual paratransit TDA 4.5 claim to MTC.
- Review and evaluate bids for transportation program services.

C. Fremont and Newark members will meet to consider matter related to operations of AC Transit in the two cities. AC Transit will provide staff support to the Committee, including staff reports, agendas, minutes, resolutions, etc. The Committee, in conjunction with the AC Transit staff, will determine meeting dates and times.

## **Article IV - Election of Officers**

The Chairman and Vice Chairman shall be elected for one year terms of office, with the election of officers to occur at the first regular meeting of each calendar year.

## **Article V - Duties of Officers**

### **A. CHAIRMAN**

1. It shall be the duty of the Chairman to preside at all meetings of the Committee.

2. He shall decide all points of order and, unless a majority of votes dissent therefrom, his decision shall stand.

3. He shall appoint the members and Chairman of all subcommittees. Appointments to each subcommittee shall be ratified by the Committee. The Chairman shall be an ex-officio member of each subcommittee.

B. VICE CHAIRMAN: The Vice Chairman shall perform all duties which may be assigned to him and shall perform the duties of the Chairman in his absence.

## **Article VI - Individual Authority, and**

### **Attendance Obligations of Committee Members**

A. No action shall be taken by any member on behalf of or in the name of the Committee unless he be specifically authorized by the Committee to do so.

B. All Committee members have an obligation of faithful and regular attendance at duly held meetings of the Committee. A member shall be ineligible to continue membership if he fails to attend any series of three consecutive regular meetings of the body. Members and alternates will receive information packets.

## **Article VII - Subcommittees**

The Committee may, at its discretion, establish standing and ad hoc subcommittees composed of less than a majority of the members of the Committee. The purpose of said subcommittees may be to investigate, study, consider, and report back to the Committee at a regular or special meeting with respect to a particular matter of concern. The reports and recommendation of a subcommittee shall be made publicly to the Committee at a regular or special meeting and discussion and deliberation with respect thereto shall be held publicly by the Committee before final action thereon is taken.

## **Article VIII - Meetings**

A. REGULAR MEETINGS: The Committee shall establish a schedule of regular meetings which shall be adhered to. Regular meetings shall be held at least once every two months. The schedule of such regular meetings shall be adopted by the Committee at its first regular meeting of each calendar year.

B. SPECIAL MEETINGS: Special meetings of the Committee may be held on call of the Chairman, or by a quorum of the members of the Committee. The call shall be by written notice delivered to each Committee member and to each local newspaper of general circulation station which has in writing requested notice of such meetings. Any such call and notice must be delivered personally or by mail at least twenty-four (24) hours prior to the time set for such meeting. The call for a special meeting shall specify the time, date and place of such meeting and the business to be transacted at such meeting. The notice provided for herein may be dispensed with as to any member who is actually present at the meeting at the time it convenes or who, at or prior to the time the meeting convenes, files with the Chairperson a written waiver of notice.

C. ADJOURNED MEETINGS: The Committee may adjourn any regular, adjourned regular, special or adjourned special meeting to a time and place specified in the order of adjournment. Less than a quorum may so adjourn from time to time. If all members are absent from any regular or adjourned regular meeting, the Chairperson may declare the meeting adjourned to a stated time and place and he shall cause a written notice of the adjournment to be given of the order or notice of adjournment shall be conspicuously posted on or near the door of the place where the regular, adjourned regular, special or adjourned special meeting was held within 24 hours after the time of the adjournment. When a regular or a adjourned regular meeting is adjourned as provided in this section, the resulting adjourned regular meeting is a regular meeting for all purposes. When an order of adjournment of any meeting fails to state the hour at which the adjourned meeting is to be held, it shall be held at the hour specified for regular meetings herein.

D. QUORUM: A quorum of the Committee at any given time shall be deemed to be a majority of the number of members at that time and currently holding active appointment to and membership on the Commission.

E. OPEN MEETINGS: All meetings of the Committee shall be open to the public.

## **Article IX - Conduct of Business**



A. **ORDER OF BUSINESS:** The business of each meeting of the Committee shall be transacted as far as possible in the following order:

1. Check for quorum by Chairman.
2. Approval or correction of minutes.
3. Oral communications.
4. Receipt of Committee correspondence.
5. Reports of Committee members and staff.
6. Committee reports.
7. Unfinished business.
8. New business.
9. Committee matters.
10. AC Transit business matters.

B. **ROLL CALL:** Each roll call of the Committee shall be in alphabetical order, except that the Chairman shall be called last. When the roll is called on a motion, any member present who does not vote in an audible voice shall be recorded as "aye."

C. **ROLL CALL NOT REQUIRED:** The roll need not be called in voting upon a motion except when requested by a member. If the roll is not called, in the absence of objection, the Chairman may declare the motion unanimously approved.

D. **REQUEST TO BE HEARD:** At all times, the Chairman shall decide the order of appearance, time limits, and other ground rules for hearing persons wishing to be heard, subject to action by a majority of the Committee.

E. **RULES OF DEBATE:** The following shall be used by the Chairman and members of the Committee as the general rules of debate. However, the Chairman may at any time declare that the said rules are suspended, until such time as he declares them in effect once again. Such declaration may be made upon his own volition, or at the suggestion of any member of the Committee. Such declaration, however, is subject to action by a majority of the Committee.

1. **Presiding Officer may Debate and Vote, etc.:** The Presiding Officer may move, second and debate from the chair, subject only to such limitations of debate as are by these rules imposed on all members and

shall not be deprived of any of the rights and privileges of a Committee member by reason of his acting as the Presiding Officer.

2. **Getting the Floor; Improper References to be Avoided:** Every member desiring to speak shall address the chair, and upon recognition by the Presiding Officer, shall confine himself to the question under debate, avoiding all personalities and indecorous language.

3. **Interruptions:** A member, once recognized, shall not be interrupted when speaking unless it be to call him to order, or as herein otherwise provided. If a member, while speaking, be called to order, he shall cease speaking until the question or order be determined and, if in order, he shall be permitted to proceed.

4. **Privilege of Closing Debate:** The Committee member moving the adoption of any motion shall have the privilege of closing the debate.

**5. Motion to Reconsider:** A motion to reconsider any action by the Committee may be made only on the day such action was taken. It may be made either immediately during the same session, or at a recessed or adjourned session thereof. Such motion must be made by one of the prevailing side, but may be seconded by any member, any may be made at any time and have precedence over all other motions or while a member has the floor; it shall be debatable. Nothing herein shall be construed to prevent any member of the Committee from making or remaking the same or any other motion at a subsequent meeting of the Committee.

**6. Remarks of Committee Members; When Entered in Minutes:** A Committee member may request, through the Presiding Officer, the privilege of having an abstract of his statement on any subject under consideration by the Committee entered in the minutes. If the Committee consents thereto, such statement shall be entered in the minutes.

**7. Synopsis of Debate; When Entered in Minutes:** The staff may be directed by the Presiding Officer, with consent of the Committee, to enter in the minutes, a synopsis of the discussion on any question coming regularly before the Committee.

**8. Rules of Order:** Except as otherwise provided in these rules, "Robert's Rules of Order, Revised 75th Anniversary Edition" shall be used as a guide to the conduct of the meetings of the Committee provided, however, that the failure of the Committee to conform to any rule of order shall not, in any instance, be deemed to invalidate the action taken.

## **Article X - Amendments**

Subject to Section 2-3102 of the Fremont Municipal Code concerning City Council approval, these Rules and Regulations may be amended by a majority vote of the total membership of the Committee at any regular meeting of the Committee provided, however, that no amendment shall be adopted by the Committee unless notice of intention to consider the particular amendment, with a copy of the proposed amendment or a reasonably accurate summary thereof, has been sent to all members of the Committee not less than ten (10) days prior to the meeting at which any such amendment is considered.

# **BYLAWS**

The following constitutes the Bylaws, including appropriate rules for procedure, as adopted by the Accessibility Advisory Committee of the Alameda-Contra Costa Transit District.

## **ARTICLE I - GENERAL PURPOSE, GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

### **SECTION 1. PURPOSE**

As determined by the Board of Directors, the purpose of the Accessibility Advisory Committee is to review, to comment and to advise the Board of Directors and District staff regarding the implementation of District planning programs and services for elderly and disabled people.

Issues which may be addressed by the Committee include, but are not limited to:

- a) Plans to purchase operating equipment (e.g., buses and other vehicles, passenger lifts, kneelers, steps and speakers)
- b) Equipment, maintenance and modifications
- c) Bus headsigns, logos, signage
- d) Appropriateness of bus stop locations
- e) Functional arrangements of bus stops (e.g., location, recognition, identification, pole, signage, benches, shelters, and obstructions)
- f) Fares, schedules and routes

- g) Operator assistance and transit information centers
- h) Public education, awareness, and input
- i) Staff (including operators) training, awareness and sensitivity
- j) Other accessible public transit matters as requested by the Board of Directors or staff.

## **SECTION 2. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

To accomplish the above stated purpose, the Committee and its membership shall endeavor to:

- a) Make recommendations to the Board of Directors regarding policy matters and priority needs which will improve service for elderly and disabled people;
- b) Provide an open forum for the discussion and evaluation of District services;
- c) Promote and aid in the dissemination of information to elderly and disable communities within the District's entire service area.

## **ARTICLE II - OFFICERS**

### **SECTION 1. CHAIR**

The Committee shall select from its membership a Chair who shall preside at all meeting of the Committee. The Chair shall appoint members to all subcommittees and shall serve as ex-officio member to all subcommittees. The Chair shall also perform such other duties as may be requested from time to time by the Committee.

### **SECTION 2. VICE CHAIR**

The Committee shall select from its membership a Vice Chair who, in the absence or inability of the Chair to serve, shall have all of the powers and shall perform all of the duties of the Chair. The Vice Chair shall perform such other duties from time to time as may be requested by the Committee.

### **SECTION 3. CHAIR AS PRESIDING OFFICER**

The Chair may move, second and debate from the Chair, subject only to such limitations of debate as are imposed on all members. He/she shall not be deprived of any rights and privileges of any member by reason of his/her acting as presiding officer. However, the Presiding Officer is primarily responsible for the conduct of Committee meetings.

When appropriate for clarification purposes or requested by a member, the Chair shall restate each motion immediately following its introduction. In situations where extensive discussion or debate occurs following introduction of a motion, or when an amendment(s) has been made to a motion, the Chair, or his/her designee, shall restate each motion immediately prior to calling for the vote. Following the vote, the Chair shall announce whether the motion carried or was defeated.

The Chair shall be responsible for the maintenance of order and decorum of Committee meetings. The Chair shall determine all Points of Order subject to the right of any member to appeal the determination to the entire Committee. In the event of an appeal, the majority decision of the Committee shall govern and conclusively determine any question of order.

### **SECTION 4. STAFF SUPPORT**

As authorized by the Board of Directors, the General Manager, or his/her designee, shall serve as Committee Secretary to prepare meeting notices, agendas, and minutes.

## **SECTION 5. SELECTION OF CHAIR/VICE CHAIR**

(a) Term. During the regular meeting in April of each year, and at any time when there is a vacancy in the office of Chair or Vice Chair, the Committee shall elect one of its members as Chair and one of its voting members as Vice Chair. The regular term of office for the Chair and Vice Chair shall be one year; however, the Chair and Vice Chair shall serve at the direction of the Committee and may be removed by a majority vote of the appointed Committee members.

(b) Temporary/Permanent Vacancies. If the Chair and Vice Chair are both absent from any meeting and/or are unable to act, the meeting shall be called to order by the Committee Secretary whereupon the Secretary shall immediately call for the selection of a Temporary Presiding Officer.

(c) Failure to Elect. If the Committee fails to elect a Chair or Vice Chair, the existing Chair or Vice Chair shall continue in said office until the Committee elects a successor.

## **ARTICLE III - MEETINGS**

### **SECTION 1. GENERAL**

All meetings of the Committee shall be open to the public.

### **SECTION 2. QUORUM**

**REGULAR BUSINESS:** A majority of the appointed members of the AAC shall constitute a quorum of the AAC for the purposes of conducting business.

(Examples: If there are no vacancies on the AAC, 8 members would constitute the majority of the 14-member Committee. If three vacancies existed on the AAC, 6 members would constitute the majority of the 11-member Committee.)

### **SECTION 3. ACTIONS**

All actions of Committee shall be by motion passed by a majority of the voting members present at a meeting.

### **SECTION 4. MEETING PLACE**

All regular meetings of the Committee, except as noted in the following paragraph, shall be held at the District Offices located at 1600 Franklin Street, Oakland, California.

In the event of a change of meeting place, appropriate and timely public notices shall be given in accordance with requirements of State law.

Reference: GC Section 54954.

### **SECTION 5. REGULAR MEETING**

Regular meetings of the Committee shall be held on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 1:00 p.m.

As the need presents, the Committee may meet at other times as provided in Sections 6 through 10 below. Reference: GC Section 54954.

### **SECTION 6. ADJOURNED-REGULAR MEETINGS**

Any regular or adjourned-regular meeting of the Committee may be adjourned to a time and place specified in the order of adjournment of that meeting, but not beyond the next regular meeting. Reference: GC Section 54955.

## **SECTION 7. NOTICE OF ADJOURNED-REGULAR MEETINGS**

When all members of the Committee are absent from a meeting and the Committee Secretary adjourns that meeting to an Adjourned-Regular Meeting, the Committee Secretary shall (1) within 24 hours of the adjournment, cause a notice of adjournment to be posted near the front door of the District Offices and (2) provide notice as specified in Section 9 below. Said notice shall give the time and place of the established Adjourned-Regular Meeting. Reference: GC Section 54955.

## **SECTION 8. SPECIAL MEETINGS**

A Special Meeting may be called at any time by the Chair of the Committee, or by a majority of Committee members. Reference: GC Section 54956.

## **SECTION 9. NOTICE OF SPECIAL MEETINGS**

Written notice shall be required of all special meetings by personal delivery or by mail. Notice shall be received at least 24 hours before the time of the meeting and shall be given to each member of the Committee and to each local newspaper of general circulation, radio or television station requesting notice in writing. The call and notice shall specify the time and place of the special meeting and the business to be transacted. Mailing and posting of the agenda of the special meeting at least 72 hours in advance of the meeting may serve as notice for the meeting. Reference: GC Section 54956.

## **SECTION 10. ADJOURNMENT**

The Committee may adjourn any meeting to a time and place specified in the motion or order of adjournment. Less than a quorum of the Committee may adjourn from time to time. If all members are absent from any regular or adjourned-regular meeting, the Committee Secretary may declare the meeting adjourned to a stated time and place and shall cause a written notice of adjournment to be given in the same manner as given for special meetings. Reference: GC Section 54955.

## **ARTICLE IV - AGENDAS, MINUTES, RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **TO THE BOARD**

#### **SECTION 1. AGENDAS**

The Committee Secretary shall prepare and submit to the Chair a draft agenda for each regular meeting ten days prior to the scheduled meeting. The Chair shall, within two days of receipt, review the final agenda and approve the order of items thereon.

The Committee Secretary shall be responsible for distributing the final agenda and preparing or compiling the associated agenda materials for each meeting. Agenda materials shall be mailed preferably one week prior to each meeting but in no event agendas shall be mailed so as to be received no later than 48 hours prior to the next meeting.

#### **SECTION 2. MINUTES**

Minutes of each Committee meeting shall be prepared by the Committee Secretary and distributed to Committee members together with the agenda for the next month's meeting. Copies of all minutes shall be forwarded to the District Secretary for distribution to the Board of Directors.

#### **SECTION 3. PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE**

The Committee shall use Sturgis' "Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure" as a guideline for conducting its business except as provided otherwise by State law or these Bylaws.

#### **SECTION 4. RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

The Committee Secretary shall be responsible for insuring that all recommendations of the Committee are forwarded to the Board of Directors.

Committee members may participate in presentations to the Board of Directors. Committee members may also present minority viewpoints of the Committee to the Board of Directors but shall in such presentations clarify that such viewpoints are a minority report.

## **ARTICLE V - SUBCOMMITTEES**

### **SECTION 1. SUBCOMMITTEES**

Subcommittees may be established to carry out specific tasks or make recommendations to the Committee as a whole. Subcommittees may be established at the direction of the AAC or the Chair. The AAC Chair shall be responsible for appointing members to subcommittees and designating the chair for such subcommittees.

The following standing subcommittees have a potential for attendance by a quorum of the full committee or in rare cases a Committee quorum is appointed to serve. As such, meeting for the following subcommittees shall be noticed and conducted in accordance with applicable State laws.

(a) Operations, Equipment, and Facilities - Regular meetings shall be held on the 4th Tuesday of every month at 10:00 a.m.

(b) Education, Training and Communications - Regular meetings shall be held on the 4th Tuesday of every month at 1:00 p.m.

(c) Paratransit - Regular meetings shall be held on the 4th Tuesday of every month at 3:00 p.m.

## **ARTICLE VI - AMENDMENTS**

### **SECTION 1. AMENDMENTS**

These by-laws may be amended by a majority vote of those present at any meeting provided that a copy of the proposed amendment has been mailed to each Committee member in advance of the time the proposed amendment is to be voted upon.

## **ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITMENT BYLAWS**

**ADOPTED: JULY 13, 1993**

# **BYLAWS**

## **HARTLINE CONSUMER ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**(Revision Effective October 24, 1991)**

### **Article I - NAME**

The name of this committee shall be the Hillsborough Area Regional Transit Authority Consumer Advisory Committee (CAC).

### **Article II - OBJECTIVE**

The Consumer Advisory Committee (CAC) serves to provide HART staff with input, comments and suggestions regarding issues of importance to consumers of public transportation. The committee shall serve in an advisory capacity.

Its objective will be to assist Authority management in developing and perfecting a public transit system which meets the needs of Hillsborough County residents in a practical, cost efficient manner. The functions of the committee shall include, but is not limited to, the following major tasks:

1. Identification of consumer issues related to the transit system's physical equipment. Physical equipment includes but is not limited to items such as buses; transfer instruments; bus shelters; wheelchair lifts; coin changers.
2. Identification of consumer issues related to the design of the HARTline system. Design issues include elements such as distance between bus stops; bus stop locations; bus routing; HARTline's telephone information office; fare structures.
3. Identification of items related to marketing communications. Marketing communications includes issues such as signage; legibility of printing materials (i.e. schedules); quality/value of disseminated marketing information; effectiveness of HARTline promotions.
4. Identification of items influencing consumer perceptions and behavior, including but not limited to bus operator attitudes; safety; "ease of use" of the HARTline system; "convenience" and "reliability" of transit service and facilities.

### **Article III - COMPOSITION-QUALIFICATION AND TERMS**

The Consumer Advisory Committee will consist of a maximum of twenty members appointed by the Executive Director. Composition is to be reflective of HARTline's transit service users throughout the service area. Members will be appointed according to their familiarity with particular routes, geographical areas and/or of the HART system.

Members will be appointed for two (2) year terms. A member can be appointed for a maximum of two (2) terms. The term will begin at first meeting to which the member is notified.

### **Article IV - MEMBERSHIP WITHDRAWAL**

Membership will be withdrawn for any of the following reasons at the direction of the Executive Director:

1. Three (3) consecutive unexcused absences of five (5) absences in a 12-month period.
2. Misrepresentation at time of appointment with respect to personal use of HART's service.
3. For any serious misconduct which includes but is not limited to criminal conviction, moral turpitude or use of slurs, derogatory comments, or any other conduct, whether physical, verbal or written directed at or based upon another person's race, color, origin, sex, religion, sexual orientation, disability, or age.
4. Expiration of second two (2) year term as a member.
5. If member does not reside in the HART service area or ceases to use the system.

### **Article V - OFFICERS AND DUTIES**

The committee members will elect a chairperson and vice-chairperson by a majority of the members present at the November/December meeting. A quorum is necessary to hold the elections. Offices will be held for one year or until their successors are elected.

The chairperson will preside at all meetings. Should the chairperson be absent, the vice-chairperson will preside. In the unlikely event both chair and vice-chairperson are absent, the HART staff representative will preside.

HART staff will provide the secretarial support for the committee including providing minutes from meeting tapes, mailing agendas to members, providing committee approved minutes for the HART Board of Directors meeting packets and any other related duties. Tapes of committee meetings will be kept according to the Public Record law.

The chairman or an appointee delegated by the committee will make presentations to the Executive Director and the

Board of Directors at milestone points in various projects or when the CAC as a whole has identified items and directed that a communication occur.

## **Article VI - MEETINGS**

The CAC will meet at least bi-monthly (every other month) on the first Wednesday of the month, unless otherwise scheduled by the majority of a quorum. Additional meetings may be required to address time sensitive matters. Meetings will be held at one of the following locations. Location to be announced prior to the meeting.

201 East Kennedy Boulevard

Suite 1600

4305 East 21st Avenue

The time of the meetings will be from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. unless otherwise agreed upon by the majority of the committee.

Agendas will be prepared and mailed to the members the week prior to the meeting. Agenda items will be agreed upon by the chairperson and HART staff representative. Any committee member may make recommendations for the agenda either to a chairperson or to the HART representative prior to the agenda being set. Those items not on the agenda may be discussed during the discussion section on the agenda. Each meeting will have an open discussion period.

Each member shall have one vote and a quorum shall consist of one half of the voting membership (HART staff are not of the voting membership). A majority of the quorum shall be necessary to present an issue to the Executive Director and to the HART Board of Directors. The Executive Director may present or ask the chairperson (or designee) to make presentations to the HART Board of Directors from time to time.

A majority of the quorum shall be necessary to approve each meetings minutes. Upon approval, minutes will be included in the following months' Board packet.

## **Article VII - ROBERT'S RULES OF ORDER**

Meetings will follow the most current edition of Robert's Rules of Order.

## **Article VIII - PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES**

No individual member shall represent the CAC to the general public or at a HART Board meeting without majority vote of a quorum at a CAC meeting prior to the representation.

No CAC member will represent HART to the general public without consent of the Executive Director (or designee) prior to the representation.

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**SACRAMENTO REGIONAL TRANSIT DISTRICT**

**DISABLED & ELDERLY**

**COMMITTEE FOR ACCESSIBLE TRANSPORTATION**

**BYLAWS**



## **ARTICLE I. NAME OF COMMITTEE**

A. The name of this committee shall be "Disabled and Elderly Committee for Accessible Transportation" and may be referred to as "DECAT."

## **ARTICLE II. ROLE OF COMMITTEE**

A. This committee is formed to assist the RT Board of Directors and staff on matters relating to the provision of transit and paratransit services to disabled and elderly individuals. In carrying out this charge, the committee shall:

1. Review current services and programs.
2. Review both short- and long-range plans, including the plans for compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and any other local, state, or federal requirements relating to accessible transportation.
3. Review Regional Transit's Capital Improvement Program.
4. Review Regional Transit's Affirmative Action Program.
5. Advise the RT Board of Directors on any other matters affecting senior citizens and individuals with disabilities.

## **ARTICLE III. MEMBERS**

A. Composition: The Committee shall be composed of nine (9) members of the community as appointed by the RT Board of Directors, including a member of the Sacramento County Advisory committee for Persons with Disabilities, a member or representative of the Sacramento County Commission on Aging, two senior citizens that are the age of 62 or over, and five (5) people with disabilities that qualify them for Regional Transit's discount monthly pass for individuals with disabilities including at least two people who are also eligible for complementary paratransit services as defined by the ADA.

B. Term of Office:

1. The term of each member of the committee shall be for two (2) years.
2. Terms shall be set so that one-half of the terms shall expire each year in September.
3. Members may be reappointed at the end of their term at the discretion of the RT Board of Directors.

C. Voting Rights: Each member shall be entitled to one vote and may cast that vote on each matter submitted to a vote of the committee. Proxy or absentee ballots shall not be permitted.

D. Termination of Membership: When a member no longer meets the membership requirements under which they were appointed, their position on the committee shall cease. Membership shall automatically terminate for any member who is absent from three consecutive regular meetings. Notification to the Chairperson or RT staff prior to the beginning of any regular meeting will not be considered an absence by a member who cannot attend.

E. Resignation: Any member may resign by filing a written resignation with the Regional Transit Board of Directors.

F. Vacancy: Any vacancy on the committee shall be filled for the remainder of the term of the committee by appointment by the Regional Transit Board of Directors.

## **ARTICLE IV. OFFICERS**

A. Officers: The officers of the committee shall be a chairperson, a vice-chairperson, and any other such officers as the committee may deem desirable.

B. Election and Term of Office: The officers of the committee shall be elected by majority vote of the membership and shall serve for one year or until such time as new officers are elected. Officers shall not hold the same office for more than two (2) consecutive one-year terms.

C. Vacancy: A vacancy in any office shall be filled by election of the committee for the unexpired duration of the vacated office.

D. Chairperson: The chairperson shall preside at all meetings of the committee and may sign all letters, reports, and other communications of the committee. In addition, the chairperson shall perform all duties incident to the office of chairperson and such other duties as may be prescribed by the committee from time to time.

E. Vice Chairperson: The duties of the vice-chairperson shall be to represent the chairperson in assigned duties and to substitute for the chairperson during his/her absence, and the vice-chairperson shall perform such other duties as from time to time may be assigned by the chairperson or by the committee.

## **ARTICLE V. ASSOCIATE MEMBERS**

A. Composition: Associate Members shall also be appointed by the RT Board of Directors to provide for participation in the advisory process by representatives of various transportation and social service organizations, as well as interested individuals. Associate Members may participate in all discussions and deliberations of the Committee, but shall have no voting rights.

Examples of represented groups include transportation providers, state and local government agencies, advocacy organizations, social service agencies, and equipment or service vendors. The maximum number of Associate Members shall be nine (9). Term of membership shall be the same as for members of the Committee as outlined in Article III above.

## **ARTICLE VI. MEETINGS OF THE COMMITTEE**

A. Regular Meetings: The committee shall meet on a monthly basis.

B. Special Meetings: Special meetings may be called by the chairperson or by majority vote of the committee.

C. Place of Meetings: The committee shall hold its regular meetings and its special meetings at the Regional Transit Headquarters, 1400 - 29th Street, Sacramento, in a place which is readily accessible by all members of the public, including disabled individuals.

D. Notice of Meetings: Any change in the established date, time or location of regular meetings must be given special notice at least 72 hours in advance of the meeting. All special meetings shall be publicized. Any required notice shall be in writing; shall state the day, hour, and location of the meeting, and shall be delivered either personally or by U.S. Mail to each member and Associate Member not less than 72 hours or more than two weeks prior to the date of such meeting.

E. Decisions of the Committee: All decisions of the committee shall be made only after an affirmative vote of a majority of its voting members in attendance, provided a quorum is present. Minutes of meetings of this committee, as well as any special reports or communications desired by the committee, shall be forwarded each month by staff to the RT Board of Directors. In addition, the Chairperson or his/her designee may personally present issues to the RT Board of Directors.

Dissenters may forward to the RT Board of Directors their reservations or disagreement with the decision of the membership by recording same in the Minutes of the Meeting or in the form of a prepared minority report.

F. Quorum: The presence of five members of the total membership shall be required in order to constitute a quorum necessary for the transaction of the business of the committee. No decision of the committee shall be valid unless a majority of the duly appointed members present concur therein by their votes. In the event that the full committee complement of nine is not maintained, a quorum shall consist of a minimum of one-half of the number of members then

serving.

G. Conduct of Meetings: All regular and special meetings of the committee shall be conducted in accordance with these bylaws and with the most current edition of Robert's Rules of Order. In case of conflict, these bylaws shall take precedence over Robert's Rules of Order. Meeting minutes, correspondence, exhibits, and other information shall be made available to members in accessible formats as needed.

H. Meetings Open to the Public: All regular and special meetings of the committee shall be open at all times to the public. Meeting agendas shall be posted in a public place in the same manner as agendas posted for meetings of the RT Board of Directors.

## ARTICLE VII. BYLAWS

A. Changes: Any bylaw may be altered, amended or annulled at any time by a majority vote of the Regional Transit Board of Directors after consultation with or by recommendation of the committee.

## ARTICLE VIII. TERM OF COMMITTEE

A. Committee Term: The committee shall remain in existence until discharged by action of the RT Board of Directors.

Approved: August 22, 1988

Revision Approved: December 14, 1992

-II-



- o Advisory Capacity
- o Mission, Goal & Objectives
- o Responsibility to Represent Whole Community
- o Open Communications

## Options for Decision-making

- o Consensus-Building
- o Commitment Contract
- o Conflicts of Interest
- o Dealing with the Press

## II. Your role as a Committee Member

### THE ADVISORY CAPACITY OF THE ACCESS COMMITTEE

The role of the ACCESS Committee is to advise SunLine Transit Agency staff members on transit and paratransit policies, programs, plans, and other related issues. The Committee does not make recommendations directly to the SunLine Board, although Committee members may address the Board at any Board meeting that is open to the public. Individual ACCESS Committee members should not represent their individual views or recommendations as those of the Committee unless these recommendations have been voted on and approved by the whole Committee. When Committee members wish to address the Board as individuals they must indicate so when presenting their opinions and perspectives. No statements made by the ACCESS Committee or its members should be considered to be binding on SunLine Transit Agency, its staff, or its Board members.

### ACCESS COMMITTEE MISSION, GOAL, AND OBJECTIVES

The ACCESS Committee has developed a mission statement, a purpose statement, a goal, and objectives for 1995, as follows:

*Mission Statement: The charge of the Advisory Committee is to assist SunLine Transit Agency in fulfilling its stated mission. SunLine's mission: As a public agency, SunLine Transit Agency advocates and provides safe, economical, and environmentally friendly transit service in the Coachella Valley.*

*Purpose: The purpose of the ACCESS Committee is to provide SunLine Transit Agency with information on how to continually improve service to older riders and riders with disabilities. This includes providing input from the actual riders themselves on their experiences and any suggestions that they might have to fine tune the system. The Committee also takes into consideration the concerns of coach operators and administrative staff on how to improve the overall system.*

*Goal: The goal of the ACCESS Committee is to advise SunLine on any and all matters concerning older riders and riders with disabilities, staff training, physical equipment and legal requirements focussing on access issues. The Committee is advisory in nature and draws upon a variety of professional and personal experience.*

1995 Objectives:

- *Stay focussed on our mission statement.*
- *Increase our Committee membership.*
- *Improve SunDial service by having better communication between consumers/dispatch/drivers.*
- *Expand the Customer Committee and have them provide viable, practical and cost effective solutions to the issues they raise--possibly have volunteers assist as telephone operators.*
- *Continue improving driver training as it pertains to the elderly and riders with disabilities.*
- *Have our committee function in a cooperative spirit.*
- *Have a wheelchair accessible taxi service available here in the Coachella Valley.*
- *Redistribute the Measure A funds in the County to address our needs.*

### RESPONSIBILITY TO REPRESENT THE WHOLE COMMUNITY

As a member of the ACCESS Committee, you are part of a team that is working with SunLine Transit Agency to facilitate communication with the general public, particular elderly persons and persons with disabilities, in order to

improve transit service in your community. You are in a unique position to serve as a liaison between the public and SunLine staff and board members. In this position, you are representing particular constituencies (e.g., developmentally disabled persons, frail elderly), but it is important that you at all times attempt to consider the opinions and preferences of the various interests and groups in order to arrive at recommendations that benefit the entire community. You are encouraged to explain and promote the policies and programs of SunLine to the public, and, in turn, to transmit back to SunLine the reactions and opinions of citizens as they relate to public transportation in the Coachella Valley.

## **OPEN COMMUNICATION**

Keeping the lines of communication open is key to being an effective Committee member. This guideline applies to members' relationship with each other, SunLine staff and Board members, and the general public. Members should allow each other adequate time to present their points of view before making comments, be open and honest at all times, and respect others' opinions. SunLine staff and the Committee may not always agree on recommendations or particular courses of action. If a staff report to the Board will be contrary to a Committee recommendation, staff should notify the Committee chairperson in advance. The Committee may then choose to communicate to the Board its opinion on the matter. In this way, the Board members will be able to receive complete information and will be informed of all possible options when making decisions. Soliciting feedback from the community is an important role of the ACCESS Committee. From time to time, members of the general public may wish to address the Committee members. Members should receive this input but not comment upon it unless the group decides that an issue has been raised that merits further investigation and agendaizes the topic for further discussion.

## **OPTIONS FOR DECISION-MAKING**

### Introduction

The two models for decision-making by an advisory committee are by majority vote and by consensus. Although it may be possible to blend the two models by using the consensus model before taking a vote, the two models could be contradictory because participants in a meeting may behave differently based on whether or not they will be ultimately voting on an issue or working together to come to a group consensus. Voting tends to encourage behavior focussed on winning the majority rather than resolution of issues/differences. A criticism of consensus is that it leads to mediocre decisions since the decision represents the "average" of the views.

The current decision-making process used by the ACCESS Committee is that of the majority vote, which consists of the following basic steps:

- Issue is raised and usually referred to a subcommittee for further investigation.
  - Subcommittee conducts investigation, discusses approaches, and suggests options (and may also make recommendations) to full Committee.
  - The full Committee discusses options, results of subcommittee investigation.
  - Chairperson calls for a vote on the issue.
- The consensus-building model follows these general steps:
- After investigation of issue by a subcommittee, options are presented to the Committee.
  - Each Committee member states her or his point of view while keeping her or his mind open to other positions.
  - Committee members ensure that they understand each other's positions and engage in discussion designed to suggest solutions that will result in consensus.
  - The discussions end when the Committee arrives at a consensus.

### Current Decision-Making Process of ACCESS Committee

The following lists the specific steps involved in the Committee's decision-making process. Topics and issues may originate from a variety of sources (members of the public, Committee members, SunLine staff), but it is the Committee's decision as to whether or not to consider and make a recommendation on a particular topic.

I. Topic/issue raised by public, Committee member, SunLine staff.

A. If neither Committee member nor SunLine staff person requests that topic/issue be agendaized for discussion by Committee, then no further action is taken.

B. Committee member or SunLine staff persons may request that the topic/issue be agendaized for discussion by the ACCESS Committee.

1. Discussion of topic/issue by Committee members may result in:

a. no further action;

b. determination that additional investigation/fact-finding is needed; or,

c. a recommendation by the Committee (see Item C.3. below for a description of how recommendations are made by the Committee).

C. If additional information is needed, topic/issue is referred to a subcommittee formed for that purpose. Experts on the particular topic/issue (who are not necessarily Committee members) may be asked to participate on subcommittee.

1. Subcommittee may hold one or several meetings to gather information and discuss options. Subcommittee provides periodic updates on progress at regular Committee meetings.

2. Subcommittee reaches consensus on appropriate recommendations to the ACCESS Committee. These recommendations are agendaized for action at next regular Committee meeting. Any background materials are included in agenda packet.

3. Recommendations presented by subcommittee at Committee meeting. The public is invited to comment on the agenda item, and then the Chairperson closes public discussion. Committee members then discuss the recommendations among themselves. When discussion appears to have covered available options, the Chairperson calls for a vote, and the Committee members vote on the subcommittee recommendations. The results of the vote and any associated recommendations are then reflected in the Committee's meeting minutes and communicated to SunLine staff as appropriate.

D. When a topic on which the Committee has made a recommendation is presented by staff to the Board of Directors, SunLine staff will include the Committee's recommendation as part of the background information on the agenda item.

## **CONSENSUS-BUILDING**

[Excerpted, with permission of City of Walnut Creek, California, from "Commission Capacity Building Workshop", January 24, 1981, conducted by Pacific Management Group, Berkeley, California.]

Although the Committee's decisions are currently made using the majority vote, the use of the procedures does not mean that Committee meetings are simply a series of rudimentary formalized parliamentary moves. In fact, the Committee's meetings are usually "working" meetings that blend consensus-building and voting methods. The League of Women Voters has used such a blended method successfully. Most decisions are made by members of the various local Leagues in small groups by consensus. The national program also is developed in this way with suggestions going back and forth from local Leagues and between State Leagues. The resulting proposed national program is then presented to the representatives from all the local and State Leagues in the country at a national convention. Changes may be made from the floor in the working of items and sometimes a proposed item is rejected and another substituted, but since there has been thorough preliminary discussion and substantial agreement prior to the convention, radical changes at the convention are unusual. The final determination of the League's program is made using a majority vote, but the prior give-and-take of ideas leading to substantial agreement through consensus contributes to the success of this problem-solving/decision-making method.

The potential pitfall of blending consensus-building and voting is that the process will not really address the concerns and issues of all members because the focus is on winning the vote. In contrast to winning, the term "consensus" refers to the sense of the meeting or an acceptance of the groups' conclusions or recommendations. The use of consensus is essential at each step in the decision-making process and especially in the selection of the final agreement if the solution is to be one that all Committee members can support. The process of arriving at consensus does not involve parliamentary procedures but rather a free and open exchange of ideas that continues until agreement is reached. The consensus-building process assures that each individual's concerns are heard and understood and that a sincere attempt has been made to take these concerns into consideration in the search for a recommendation. This recommendation may not reflect the exact wishes of each Committee member, but since it does not violate the deep concerns of anyone, it can be agreed to by all. Consensus, then, is a cooperative effort to find a sound solution acceptable to everyone rather than a competitive struggle in which an unacceptable solution is forced on the "losers".

A criticism of consensus voiced by some is that it leads to mediocre decisions since the decision must always represent the average of the views held by the problem-solving group. This criticism is based on the assumption that each persons' opinion carries equal weight in arriving at a consensual decision. In a group skilled in problem-solving, however, the influence exercised by each person reflects the groups' estimate of the significance of that persons' contribution. Those who do their homework and come fully informed and prepared to discuss all aspects of the issue are the influential members.

## **COMMITMENT CONTRACT**

To clarify what is expected of members, the Committee will be developing a Commitment Contract to be understood and signed by each member of the group. The Commitment Contract should include the following basic elements:

Commitment to:

- Support goals of ACCESS Committee
- Attend Committee meetings regularly and inform staff when unable to attend
- Do homework/review background materials in preparation for meetings
- Participate constructively in the decision-making processes of the Committee
- Always be open and honest in discussions with fellow members and the public
- Respect others' opinions
- Be responsible to the entire SunLine community

If the ACCESS Committee adopts a consensus decision-making model, an element should be added to the Contract indicating that members will focus on achieving consensus in the group rather than winning a majority vote.

## **CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

Since the ACCESS Committee's role is to work closely with SunLine staff on policies, plans, and programs, it is not likely that many conflicts of interest on the part of Committee members will arise. However, there may be instances where a Committee member has a financial interest in a particular issue before the group, has a role with another organization that is inconsistent with the member's role on the ACCESS Committee, or participates in another group with conflicting goals. In these cases, the member should reveal the potential conflict to the group and agree on the most appropriate course of action. For instance, a non-profit organization may be applying for a Federal grant for a new van, and the organization has requested the ACCESS Committee's support of its application. If a Committee member has any financial interest in the organization (such as being an employee), that member should refrain from discussing or voting on the recommendation. As issues of conflict of interest come up while Committee business is conducted, members should always feel free to discuss any concerns or ask any questions of SunLine staff.

## **DEALING WITH THE PRESS**

The attached guide provides information about methods for effectively communicating with the press. Other related issues that the Committee should consider discussing include:

1. Should one person be designated by the Committee to be its spokesperson?
2. If a designated spokesperson is not available to speak with the press, who should handle the situation?
3. If, as a Committee member, you are contacted by the press, what should you do?

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## **The News Interview Survival Guide**

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### **Introduction**

News interview survival training is designed to raise your comfort level and reduce the risk in news interviews.

These objectives are accomplished by taking the mystery out of the news process, showing you your role in the interview, and identifying principles you can use to survive news interviews.

You will be prepared to meet the press when you can

- identify news questions you would ask if you were the reporter,
- frame answers to those questions, and
- . set your own agenda for news interviews.

Some people describe this training as practical journalism education combined with personal communication skills.

The News Interview Survival Program was developed by Chuck Rossie to help individuals and organizations deal with reporters in active and positive ways.

### **The News:**

#### **Highly Situational**

News is situational.

Yesterday's news may be forgotten today. Sensational developments may keep a story alive and running for several days.

Big news may consume all available space and time, crowding out other news. Small stories may get big play here if they are similar to big news from far away.

The ebb and flow of advertising influences the time and space available in the "news hole", that space devoted to news and features next to the advertising.



The day to day size of newspapers changes because of the advertising.

This fluctuation changes the need for news material. A news broadcast may actually expand when its advertising drops, leaving more time to fill.

Your story is one event among many in the news. Reporters may have only a brief time to understand a complicated story and depend on you for help. They may have some ideas of their own you must deal with before

they can appreciate your point of view.

You may find yourself dealing with a reporter who knows a great deal about your business and understands it.

You may also find yourself dealing with a mob of reporters who know very little about you and appear rude in their rush to grab your story and run.

## The Reporter's Perspective

Interviews are the heart and soul of the news. Interviews make the difference between an idea and a news story.

Much of a reporter's time is devoted to searching for victims, witnesses, participants, suspects, accusers, investigators, officials or experts.

Successful news-gathering includes digging up interviews to give depth, background, perspective and personality to the news.

Quotations are excerpts from an interview used to explain, inform, and illuminate events. Quotes put the human face on journalism.

Colorful and telling quotes - known as sound bites - are prized in the news game.

Reporters expect to pick up enough background from the people they cover to understand virtually any story.

They believe they are doing the right thing when they get information from you and immediately attempt to get you to restate it in a more interesting way or ask you to defend your comments.

The reporter sees you as the source of information to tell the reporter's story.

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## Ground Rules

The understanding under which you give an interview - the ground rules - may be as casual as the usual relationship between yourself and journalists who cover you or specific negotiated terms and conditions.

Ground rules include whether you expect to be identified and quoted, when, where, and how the interview will be conducted-, the duration, topics you will cover, and topics you will not comment upon.

- **On the Record** - The reporter assumes everything you say is on the record and fair -game for a story unless there is a specific agreement to the contrary. You are better served by an on-the-record stance. If you want something kept secret, keep it to yourself.

- **Time and location** - Set a mutually convenient time and location. You may want to illustrate your story by going to the scene of the news.

- **Time available** - Determine in advance how much time to devote to a particular interview or to schedule for news

briefings.

- **Topics** - Your first line of defense is to determine the reporter's interest. Ask in a cooperative way how you can best (yet ready for the story).

- **Limits** - Identify and stay within your own comfort area of knowledge or expertise. As people pleasers, we all want to satisfy people we talk with. It's OK to be helpful to journalists, but not by speculating about things outside of your area.

## Basic Points

1. **Interviews are the basic tool of news gathering.** Reporters take news interviews starting with their first days on the job. If you give a lot of interviews, say one a week, you will be talking to reporters who may take up to 50 a week. The reporter may have the experience advantage. Your edge is your knowledge of the subject.

2. **The principles of giving good interviews are the same for all media.**

Most interviews are on the telephone. A few are done face to face with the reporter. A tiny fraction of all interviews are recorded for radio or television.

Brevity, simplicity, and clarity are the keys to all interviews.

3. **A news interview is like a ritual in which the reporter acts on behalf of the public and you speak through the reporter to the people at home.**

Reporters ask questions they think interested members of the public would ask. The reporter draw out information the reporter thinks the public has the right to know.

Your answers are delivered to the reporter, but you want your comments included in a story that will reach the audience of readers, listeners, and viewers.

## Universal Mistakes

The universal mistakes are to:

1. Treat the interview as an ordinary conversation,
2. overload the system. and
3. merely answer questions.

### **Interview vs. conversation**

Conversations are back and forth exchanges of information. opinion. emotion. There are social rules of conduct. We match the answer to the question. We keep talking to avoid silences.

Up to 70% of the content of a conversation is nonverbal such as facial gestures, body language, and just plain noises or murmurs.

News interviews are content driven exchanges in which you provide comments for use in a news story for an audience that does not come into direct contact with you.

The interviewer represents the public, you are using the news process to reach the public.

### **Overloading**

Jargon - or talking too much overloads the system. Select words that are understood by the public, not just fellow experts or insiders.

Over-answering - gives the reporter the responsibility of deciding which of your words are the important ones. Make the selection yourself.

Also, match your pace with the ability of the reporter to absorb and process the information.

### **Initiative**

it is your interview - tell your story. Don't wait for the right questions. Be the expert. Bring up the things you think are important. Provide background. Take charge of your answers.

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## Context & Perspective

One of the hardest jobs in news is helping reporters get their arms around complicated stories. Context and perspective can be as important as specific facts.

We live in a data world. We are bombarded by data that mean very little unless we have context or background. Consider the widely reported barometric pressure, currency exchange rates, and stock market indexes as examples.

Data is at the bottom of the information chain. Above data is information. Above information is context and perspective, history, or experience.

Cosmic Concepts

Global View

Big Picture

Context/Perspective/History

Information

Data

When we ask a data question in conversation, we expect a data answer.

The expected answer to: "What time is it?" is a number. Other answers to that same question might be "We are early." "We are on time." "We are late."

In news interviews, a specific answer can be preceded or followed by its larger context. You can jump from one information level to another.

Without the big picture, many important stories are trivialized into winners and losers, or simple examples.

## Answer Formation

Some people wonder what would sound good as an answer when difficult question comes up. A more useful approach is a mechanism for gathering up the raw material for an answer.

**1. Facts** - What are the facts of the event? Who, what, when. where, why, how?

**2. Law, Rules, Regulations, or Contracts** - Was the incident covered by law or other rules with the force of law? Were laws observed or broken? Were regulations or contracts followed, or not?

**3. Policies** - How do we insure we observe the law? What are our policies to support laws, regulations, rules, and contractual obligation? How are those policies promulgated?

**4. Procedures** - What is supposed to happen every time an event such as the one we are looking at takes place? How do we make sure procedures are followed?

**5. Documentation** - What do the official records say - can we document our actions?

**6. Information** - What information on the event or events is on the record and widely available from other sources? and,

**7. The Buzz** - What rumors are circulation? What is the gossip?

Note: Your response to rumor is news - ask reporters to hold up on information you believe to be false until you can check it out

## Controversy

Anguish and upset go hand in hand with controversy. It can be very difficult to express ideas and provide answers under emotional conditions.

It can also be very difficult for reporters - and the public - to accept your comments if you ignore the human element.

One response strategy to use for emotionally charged topics is called the Empathy Grid. Five elements are always included in answers on emotional topics, in the following order:

1. EMPATHY
2. ANSWER
3. BACKGROUND
4. ANSWER
5. FUTURE

Recognize the emotional component with an empathy statement. This must be done first.

- Summarize your answer.

- Provide background on the source and thinking behind the answer. This helps reporters - and the public follow your reasoning.

- Repeat the essence of the answer. Craft the second statement of your answer as your quotable quote, the message you want everyone to have.

- Introduce your plans for the future to avoid getting bogged down in the emotional upset.

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## Survival Guide

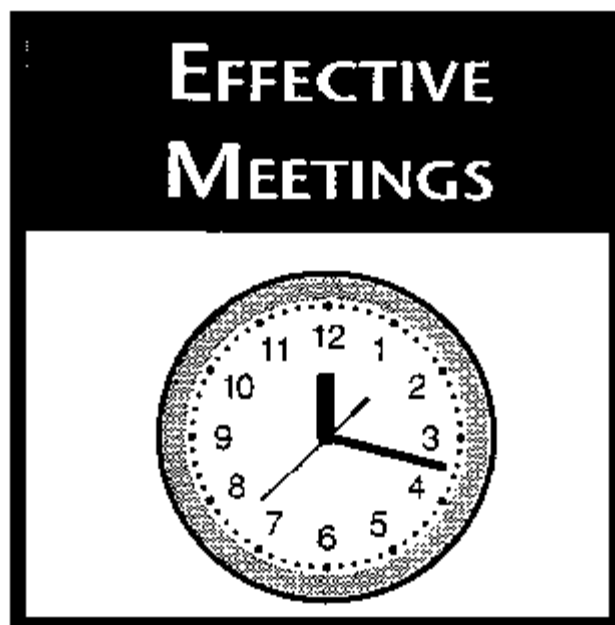
Specific points to keep in mind to survive news interviews.1. Prepare your agenda for the interview. Make a list of

points you want to make, topics you want to raise. and information you want on the record.

2. Present your main point or conclusion first, followed by supporting points. An umbrella on top helps the reporter follow your logic and comments.
3. Use the Empathy Grid for emotional topics.
4. Use anecdotes and illustrations to give life to your story in examples you select.
5. Sharpen your comments into memorable and interesting quotes.
6. Speak from the public's point of view. In fact, you can identify various segments of the public and relate to each one in your answer.
7. Broaden your answers to make your points - don't play verbal ping pong.
8. Add value to your answer by including information to help people understand the whole story.
9. Tell your story. Deliver your quotable quotes, anecdotes. Raise your agenda. Provide background.
10. Be spokesperson. Speak as the voice of the organization.
11. Avoid arguments with reporters. Your response may be in the news without any mention of the provocation.
12. If interrupted in the middle of a comment, complete your answer before changing the subject.
13. Listen carefully to questions. The "off the wall" question may be a clue the reporter doesn't understand the topic. Provide an overview before proceeding.
14. Challenge questionable information. Set the record straight.
15. Exercise extreme care if asked to agree to a paraphrase of your remarks - the paraphrase can be considered your quote.
16. If presented with a laundry list of questions, select and identify the one you will answer. It is not your responsibility to keep track of the reporter's questions.
17. Take each question as it comes don't ask the reporter to restate a question.
18. Speak plainly. Jargon familiar to insiders may have no meaning to the public, or the reporter.
19. Be direct. Evasion is usually seen as a signal you have something to hide.
20. Don't pass the buck. The news interview is not the venue to place blame.
21. If you don't know the answer, say so and offer to find out and provide the information as quickly as possible.
22. Offer to connect the right person to the reporter.
23. When you cannot divulge information, state the reason in a matter-of-fact way.
24. Be positive, avoid negative or double negative statements.
25. Don't attack organizations or competitors. The accusation may preempt the rest of the interview.
26. Tell the truth. Tell the truth. Tell the truth.

Everything you bring to the interview will be better than stuff you make up after you hear the question.

-III-



- "How to Run a Meeting," by Antony Jay, reprint no. 76204 from Harvard Business Review
- Agendas
- Dealing with the Public
- Attitudes and Awareness Group Discussion Exercise

## "How to Run a Meeting"

by Antony Jay

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## **AGENDAS**

A meeting agenda should communicate what is to be accomplished during the meeting and thus encourage effective and appropriate participation by both Committee members and members of the public. Elements of a meeting agenda are:

- Opportunity for public participation - this portion of the meeting must be structured and time limited so as not to disrupt the flow of necessary business. Open public comment should be designated for a particular amount of time on the agenda, and this time allotment should be followed. It is recommended that public comment not be acted upon by the Committee members; instead, any Committee member may request that an issue brought up during the public comment period be agendaized for a future meeting.
- Action Items. These are items on which the Committee is requested to make a recommendation. The agenda should reference any background materials and state the nature of the requested action (e.g., review and make recommendations regarding proposed policy on reservations for repetitive trips). Members of the public may be allowed to participate in discussion of these items. However, public input may be ended at any time by action of the chairperson or a vote of a majority of Committee members.
- Committee reports/projects in progress. These items are basically progress reports on old business items or items that are not yet ready to be agendaized as action items. For instance, a subcommittee might be in the process of reviewing driver training materials.
- New business. These items have not been discussed previously, and the Committee needs to determine what further action is warranted, if any. The agenda should reference the source of the item, reference any background materials, and should indicate what action is being requested (e.g., refer issue of service animals to a subcommittee).
- Informational reports/announcements by the chairperson and staff. These items are usually related to community events, conferences, activities of other organizations, and other business that does not fall under a particular agenda item. If a Committee member other than the chairperson wishes to make an announcement or share information, he or she may request to be recognized by the chairperson at this time.

## **DEALING WITH THE PUBLIC**

The ACCESS Committee conducts open, working meetings: the meetings are designed to accomplish a specific purpose according to an agenda that is developed ahead of time and advertised to the public. Since the meetings are open, an audience of people who are not members of the Committee are usually present and are welcomed. Involving the audience is important to the Committee members in order to achieve their goal of improving transportation for the elderly and persons with disabilities. The meeting agendas provide two ways the audience may participate: by providing comments on transportation issues during the "public comment period" and/or by commenting during discussion of a particular agenda item. If members of the audience have a particular service-related complaint, SunLine staff are

available to take the complaint.

Disadvantages of an open, working Committee meeting are:

- If the audience is a large crowd, the Committee members may find themselves "playing to" the concerns and issues of this group rather than the needs of the entire community.
- Some members of the audience may be too intimidated by speaking up in a meeting, and thus the Committee may be actually shutting off this input.

The advantage of this technique, however, is that any member of the public has the opportunity to be heard, and to participate in the decision-making process of the Committee.

At various times, the Committee may wish to conduct different types of meetings to receive public input on particularly important issues, such as regional plans. Depending on what it is the Committee wishes to accomplish, two other models for dealing with the public in a meeting format are:

- Forums are not designed to accomplish a purpose or decide on an issue but to air concerns, hear different points of view. They can play a constructive role in bringing out all points, perspectives, and interests. Forums should be advertised widely; they may include presentations by specific interest groups; and, they should be moderated by a disinterested individual who is respected by all participants.
- Open Houses provide the public with the opportunity to ask questions, express concerns, react to what is being proposed, and make suggestions to those who are responsible for developing a plan or program. Open Houses provide an informal setting that allows for two-way communication.

## **ATTITUDE AND AWARENESS GROUP DISCUSSION EXERCISE**

People have differing attitudes about aging or about disabilities. These attitudes affect how Committee members react to problems and people who come before them. The following discussion questions may help the Committee become aware of each others' views about members of the public the ACCESS Committee serves and about how to structure meetings to deal with sensitive situations as they arise. It would be beneficial to have this discussion annually at a training session or retreat so that the views of new Committee members are taken into consideration.

***Discuss how the ACCESS Committee should handle the following sensitive circumstances dealing with members of the public who come before the Committee. Should someone be designated to assist these speakers? Should members simply sit quietly until the speaker has finished? What is the best way to show courtesy and consideration?***

1. A member of the public has speech difficulties that cause the person to take a long time to express herself or himself.
2. A member of the public must use a pointer to spell out whatever he or she wants to say.
3. A person who is elderly seems confused and has difficulty coming to the point during the public comment period of the meeting.
4. A member of the public has a problem and feels comfortable with the ACCESS Committee because it doesn't seem bureaucratic. He or she wants to use the Committee as a forum, even though the topic is not within the Committee's purview.

***These situations involve your working relationship with your colleagues on the Committee. How would you, as a Committee member, react? Do you think it is necessary to take some action in all of these situations? What role does the Committee Chair have in handling the situation? What role do other Committee members have?***

1. A Committee member with a disability is impatient with others with disabilities, indicating that they should be able to compensate for their disabilities as he or she has done.



2. A Committee member responds with excessive sympathy to members of the public with disabilities; this member expresses through body language that he or she believes they have more to overcome than others.
3. A Committee member is patronizing to an elderly person who appears nervous and self-effacing when speaking to the group.
4. A Committee member has speech difficulties or must use a pointer to express himself or herself.
5. You observe that the rest of the Committee is so concerned about one person's problem that they are not taking into account the effect of the proposed solution on the entire transit system. Yet, you worry that you will appear callous and uncaring if you point this out to the group.

## **SUNLINE TOUR**

The purpose of the tour of SunLine Transit Agency is to familiarize the ACCESS Committee members with the agency in general and to learn about the context in which they will be making recommendations. During the tour, Committee members will have the opportunity to tour all SunLine facilities, observe a lift and securement devices being used, board a transit bus, ride in a paratransit van, learn where key SunLine staff are located, hear about procedures for handling complaints/compliments, walk through the ADA eligibility process, observe paratransit trips being scheduled, and learn about future service and facility plans. The following outline describes the elements of a typical tour of SunLine.

1. We began the tour at SunLine administrative offices/central maintenance facility in Thousand Palms. Staff oriented us as to where various SunLine departments are located at the facility.
2. We entered the Operations/Dispatch area and spoke with the Director of Transportation who provided an overview of his department's staffing and responsibilities and of how operational issues are resolved by road supervisors and dispatch personnel working together with members of the community.
3. Customer service staff explained how complaints are handled and described the ADA certification process, including the process for appealing denials of eligibility.
4. Next the group moved to the maintenance yard area and staff explained the features of a SunLine CNG-fueled bus and talked about the fleet in general. A person using a wheelchair and a person using crutches boarded the bus and demonstrated the use of the lift. Staff explained the features of the lift and described some enhancements made specifically by SunLine with input from ACCESS Committee members. Once on the bus, staff demonstrated several methods of securing wheelchairs, introduced the coach operator, and discussed SunLine's relationship with its operators. Staff also described the sensitivity training provided to the operators.
5. The group alighted from the bus, boarded a SunLine paratransit vehicle and observed securement of a wheelchair in the paratransit vehicle. Staff described the paratransit fleet, the service area, and features of the service. The group rode the paratransit vehicle to SunLine's new facility in Indio.
6. Staff explained that the Indio facility was an old car dealership. SunLine will be adding a CNG-fueling station to it. To maximize use of the facility, SunLine rents space to two community organizations with which it shares a conference room. The facility also includes an air-conditioned, indoor waiting area for SunLine riders who are waiting for buses. Staff explained the importance of the facility's location in lowering non-revenue miles on the paratransit vehicles. All scheduling and dispatching of paratransit takes place from the Indio facility. Staff explained how trips are scheduled, and the group observed staff using new software to schedule paratransit trips.



# SunLine Transit Agency

Application For Certification For Supplemental Service

Under The Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA)

Please type or print your answer.

Name			
Address			
City State Zip			
Telephone: Home Work			
TTY Services Available:		• Yes	• No
Language Spoken*	• Espanol	• English	• Other
Social Security Number*			
Date of birth * Age			
Referring Agency (if applicable).			
Contact Person			
Business Address			
Telephone			

\*Optional - The federal privacy act of 1974 requires that you be notified that disclosure of your social security number is voluntary; However, it may be used as part of your identification number.

1. What is the nature of your disability or condition that you feel makes you eligible for supplemental ADA service (Check all that apply).

- Cardiovascular Impairment
- Developmental Disability
- Difficulty Walking
- Hearing Disability

- Wheelchair User
- Musculo-Skeletal Disability
- Respiratory Impairment
- Visual Disability
- Mental/Cognitive Disability
- Neurological Disability
- Seizure Disorder
- Other Disability (Please Specify)

2. Has your disability been documented by a medical doctor?

- Yes
- No If yes, please state diagnosis (if known)

3. Since when have you had this disability or condition? //19

4. Is this disability or condition temporary?

- Yes If yes, expected duration until //19
- No

5. Please describe how your disability/condition limits your ability to use the regular transit system. (If available, please attach professional letters or other documentation you may have concerning your disability.)


6. Are you able to complete any of your trips on the regular transit system?

• Yes	
• No. Please Explain	

7. Are you able to independently get to and/or from a regular transit stop?

• Yes	
-------	--

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No. Please Explain</li> </ul>	

8. Are you able to independently got on and/or off a regular transit bus or rail system?

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No. Please Explain</li> </ul>	

9. What is your primary method of getting around?

- Wheelchair
- Walking

A. If you walk, please indicate which of the following assisting devices you use?

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Walker</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crutches</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cane</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Other</li> </ul>	- please specify	

A. If you use a wheelchair, is it

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manual</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Electric</li> </ul>
What is the combined weight of you and your wheelchair - approximate? Pounds	

10. How far can you continuously walk or move your wheelchair?

(e.g., 1 Mile, 30 Minutes)

11. Do you require an aide or attendant to ride the regular transit bus system?

- o Yes
- o No

12. Will you require an aide or attendant to use the paratransit network services?

- Yes
- No

10. If yes to either question 11 or 12, has an agency or medical doctor recommend the use of an aide or attendant?

- Yes
- No

14. Please list the person to be contacted in an emergency.

Name
Relationship
Phone
Address - optional

I hereby certify that the information given above is complete and correct to the best of my knowledge. I understand that if *I am* not found to be eligible for ADA supplemental service that I may appeal determination within 60 days upon receipt of written determination, and that I will be advised of the procedures for such an appeal. I hereby authorize the certifying entity to contact any agency or professional who has been indicated on this form, by narrative, or by attachment in order to verify documentation of disability.