

NOT OFFICIAL UNTIL APPROVED

**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING/CLOSED SESSION AND THE REGULAR MEETING  
OF NORTH COUNTY TRANSIT DISTRICT HELD MAY 18, 2006**

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**PUBLIC HEARING**

5. Conduct: Public Hearing for Proposed Fare Adjustments for COASTER, BREEZE, FAST and LIFT for FY 07

Ed Gallo opened the NCTD Public Hearing for proposed fare adjustments and Joe Kellejian, Chair of San Diego Association of Governments Transportation Committee, opened the public hearing for the Transportation Committee of the San Diego Association of Governments.

Joe Kellejian stated that SANDAG is responsible for approving the fare changes and incorporating them into the regional comprehensive fare ordinance. He said that the SANDAG Transportation Committee will be conducting this public hearing jointly with NCTD and he called the roll for the SANDAG Transportation Committee:

Joe Kellejian, representing North Coast Region  
Lori Holt Pfeiler, representing North County Inland  
Phil Monroe, representing South County  
Supervisor Ron Roberts, representing the County of San Diego  
Bob Emery, representing Metropolitan Transit Development Board  
Lesa Heebner, dual role representing North County Transit District and North County Transit District as an Alternate on the Transportation Committee.

Mr. Kellejian requested that NCTD staff present the fare increase proposal.

Stefan Marks, NCTD's Manager of Service Development, reviewed the principles applied for evaluating fare changes, including: fairness; sustainability; simplicity; consistency; how the fares integrate with each other; and what impacts they have on ridership. Mr. Marks stated that NCTD, as a part of regional consolidation, no longer makes choices about fares, that it is now a regional responsibility.

Mr. Marks reviewed the scope of the fare changes: the BREEZE fixed-route system; FAST dial-a-ride service; LIFT service for people with disabilities who are not able to use fixed-route services; and the COASTER. He also described the projected revenue increase, projected ridership and special event fares. Mr. Marks concluded with comments regarding a SANDAG region-wide fare study and the Smart-Card Project, both of which will come on-line in the next six to nine months.

Dave Druker requested that Mr. Marks review information on when the last fare increases occurred.

Mr. Marks responded that the last increases were as follows: COASTER on July 1, 2004; regional pass adjustments (regional monthly passes associated with the senior/disabled passes, youth passes, and good on both MTS and NCTD) had step increases the last three years, with the last one being implemented July 1, 2005; adjustments for the BREEZE and FAST fares were

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authorized on July 1, 2003 but were not implemented until November 1, 2004, due to farebox technology issues.

Norine Sigafoose requested clarification on when the changes proposed today would take effect.

Stefan Marks stated that if the changes are approved by both the SANDAG and NCTD Boards, the changes would be effective July 1, 2006.

Ms. Jennifer Knapic, San Marcos, CA spoke on her concerns regarding noticing of the Public Hearing.

Ms. Elizabeth Gerdes, Oceanside, CA stated that she was representing senior/disabled riders and requested those fares not be increased.

Mr. Frank Pendleton, Oceanside, CA spoke on his concerns regarding incorrect noticing of the Public Hearing in Spanish.

Mr. Bruce Willbrant, Oceanside, CA spoke on his concerns regarding the impact a fare increase would have on low-income riders.

Ms. Jeeni Criscenzo, Oceanside, CA spoke on her concerns regarding fare increases.

Ms. Trudy Strausbaugh, Oceanside, CA spoke on her concerns regarding running empty buses and fare increases.

Ms. Mary Leonard, Escondido, CA said she has been riding the buses since 1977 and she thanked the Board for the service.

Ed Gallo closed the NCTD public hearing.

Joe Kellejian closed the SANDAG public hearing.

Lori Holt Pfeiler requested information on farebox recovery.

Stefan Marks responded that the farebox recovery was: 8.5% for FAST; 9.5% for LIFT; 21% for BREEZE; 35% for COASTER.

Bob Emery stated he expected to see more of a financial justification for the fare increase, and that he expected to receive budget figures that would show the deficits or projected deficits.

Stefan Marks responded that when the budget process started three months ago with the SANDAG revenue estimates, there was a \$1.5 million budget deficit. He said that at one point the budget was balanced, but fuel prices increased dramatically.

Lesa Heebner added that fuel, workers compensation and insurance premium increases also impacted the budget.

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Ron Roberts stated that baseline performance indicators should be a part of this presentation.

Karen King said that typically the fare increase would be a part of the public hearing of the budget , which is later in today's agenda, but that in deference to the SANDAG members schedules, the fare hearing was put at the beginning of the meeting. She said that NCTD could provide the SANDAG members that information.

Ron Roberts suggested that a consistent presentation format be developed for both MTS and NCTD for future proposed fare changes.

Bill Horn explained that NCTD has a sub-committee process so items are heard twice by some Board members and they are presented to the full NCTD Board with a recommendation. He stated that maybe the format needs to be changed so both MTS and NCTD are doing things the same way.

Phil Monroe asked if the transit modes have the capacity to expand if service levels increased.

Ron Roberts stated he was impressed that a senior monthly pass was \$15.

Stefan Marks responded that the senior monthly pass is subsidized by TransNet.

Lesla Heebner asked about the available capacity on the COASTER.

Karen King responded that there are empty seats, but at peak times the trains may be full. She said we have the ability to add additional cars to the trains, but are reluctant to do that because not all the platforms are long enough to accommodate six car trains, but that would be the next thing we could do to increase the capacity.

Norine Sigafosse asked staff to address speakers concerns about the incorrect Spanish notice.

Stefan Marks responded that as soon as they found out the date on the notice was incorrect, they had the notice reprinted within four days.

Michael Cowett said that both he and Julie Wiley, SANDAG General Counsel, agree that NCTD has legally complied with public notice requirements.

**MOTION BY LESA HEEBNER THAT THE NCTD BOARD APPROVE STAFF RECOMMENDATION OF THE FARE INCREASES AS OUTLINED, SECONDED BY BOB CAMPBELL. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**MOTION BY BOB EMERY THAT THE SANDAG TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE ADOPT THE NCTD RECOMMENDATION FOR FARE INCREASES AND INCLUDE COMMENTS MADE TO REQUEST MORE INFORMATION IN FUTURE ACTIONS OF THIS TYPE, SECONDED BY RON ROBERTS.**

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JOE KELLEJIAN SAID THAT THE MOTION IS TO FORWARD THIS RECOMMENDATION BY THE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE TO THE SANDAG BOARD OF DIRECTORS.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Joe Kellejian adjourned the SANDAG Transportation Committee meeting at 3:27 pm.