



# **MINUTES**

## ***Legislative and Communications Committee Meeting***

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### **Committee Members Present**

#### **Via Teleconference**

Gene Hernandez, Vice Chairman  
Barbara Delgleize  
Michael Hennessey  
Mark A. Murphy  
Harry S. Sidhu  
Donald P. Wagner

### **Staff Present**

Jennifer L. Bergener, Deputy Chief Executive Officer  
Sara Meisenheimer, Deputy Clerk of the Board  
Allison Cheshire, Interim Deputy Clerk of the Board

### **Committee Members Absent**

Lisa A. Bartlett, Chairwoman

### **Via Teleconference**

Darrell E. Johnson, Chief Executive Officer  
James Donich, General Counsel

## **Call to Order**

The May 20, 2021 regular meeting of the Legislative and Communications (L&C) Committee was called to order by Committee Vice Chairman Hernandez at 9:00 a.m.

## **Roll Call**

The Deputy Clerk of the Board conducted an attendance Roll Call and announced that there was quorum of the L&C Committee.

## **Pledge of Allegiance**

Director Sidhu led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **1. Public Comments**

No public comments were received.

## **Special Calendar**

### **2. Conference Call with State Legislative Advocate Moira Topp**

Moira Topp, State Legislative Advocate, reported on the following:

- Last Friday, the Governor released his May Revision and announced that revenues have been significantly higher than expected. He is projecting \$75.7 billion surplus which is on top of \$130-\$140 billion.
- The increases are due to a strong economy. All major sources of revenue are up including personal income tax, corporate income tax and sales tax, which is important from a transportation perspective.

### 2. (Continued)

- The state of California has hit the Gann Limit which has only happened one other time in state history and \$12 billion in rebates will have to be provided to the taxpayers of California. There are a lot of questions on how it will be distributed.
- Some of the Governor's priorities for spending will be on rebates, drought water infrastructure package, homelessness funding, increases in education, and a robust transportation infrastructure package.
- The transportation infrastructure package is proposed at \$11 billion for new transportation funding. It breaks down as follows:
  - \$1.4 billion for zero emission buses and trucks;
  - \$1 billion for priority transit and rail projects;
  - \$407 million for zero emission rail and transit equipment purchase and infrastructure;
  - \$500 million for grade separation projects;
  - \$4.2 billion for high-speed rail; and
  - \$2 billion for additional shop projects.
  - \$500 million for additional active transportation projects; and
  - \$1 billion for the Los Angeles Olympics transit infrastructure buildup.
- The Governor included \$1.5 billion for trash removal and beautification.
- The May Revision should be completed by next week, then it will move into a conference committee process, and by June 15<sup>th</sup> the budget will have to be concluded.
- The deadline for all the bills to get out of their policy committee was on April 30, 2021. Every bill that had any consequence moves to the suspense file.
- Assembly Bill (AB) 1499 (Daly-Anaheim) and Senate Bill (SB) 339 (Wiener, D-San Francisco) are both bills the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) supports and are on the suspense files.
- SB 623 (Newman, D-Fullerton) was scheduled to be heard in the judiciary committee, but staff could not develop the consensus amendments, so the bill was not heard.
- Both houses have agreed to a 12-bill review limit due to coronavirus restrictions.
- The Governor will reopen the state on June 15, 2021 and there is a lot of expectation that this also means the capital would also open.



**2. (Continued)**

A discussion ensued regarding:

- Proposed funding for high-speed rail is Proposition 1A (2008) money and there is no indication that the project would be completed.
- Eligibility for the \$1.5 billion for trash removal most likely depends on the project. Included within the pot is funding for artwork.
- OCTA is in the early stages of planning for the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics.
- The tax credit cap is \$75,000 adjust gross income for individuals.
- The general fund surplus of \$75.7 billion is just general funds. On top of that is another \$25-\$26 billion that is federal dollars.
- The Governor's budget sees in their economic outlook a five-year projection of a strong economy. They are projecting on average over the next five years, a 5.8 percent growth rate on all major revenue sources.
- Most of the state's "wall of debt" was paid off during Governor Brown's term, but there are still ongoing deficit issues.

**Consent Calendar (Item 3)**

**3. Approval of Minutes**

A motion was made by Director Hennessey, seconded by Director Murphy, and following a roll call vote, declared passed 6-0, to approve the minutes of the Legislative and Communications Committee meeting of April 15, 2021.

**Regular Calendar**

**4. State Legislative Status Report**

Kristin Jacinto, Manager of State and Federal Relations, introduced Alexis Leicht, Associate Government Relations Representative, and they reported on the following:

- Trailer bill efforts such as the continued pursuit of flexibilities under the Transportation Development Act.
- Assembly Member Freidman (D-Glendale) made a budgetary request of \$500 million in the May Revision for projects that would help implement sustainable community strategies. Staff is still trying to confirm the details on what this program would look like.
- Assembly Member Freidman's request is in conjunction with her bill AB 1147 that seeks to make changes to SB 375.

#### **4. (Continued)**

- Overview of SB 640 (Becker, D-San Mateo) and how it allows more flexibility for cities in their use of SB 1 (Chapter 5, Statutes of 2017) local street and road funding. The bill is currently in the Senate Appropriations Committee and will be heard today on the suspense file.

A motion was made by Director Murphy, seconded by Director Delgleize, and following a roll call vote, declared passed 6-0, to adopt a SUPPORT position on SB 640 (Becker, D-San Mateo), which would allow cities or counties eligible for local streets and roads funding to jointly propose projects for funding.

#### **5. Federal Legislative Status Report**

Dustin J. Sifford, Senior Government Relations Representative, reported on the following:

- Congressional Republicans offered a \$568 billion infrastructure counterproposal which would mostly fund core transportation programs.
- Yesterday, the minority members of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee put forward legislative texts for their version of a very similar counter proposal.
- The President continues to informally campaign for a multi-trillion dollar package to provide transformative transportation investments.
- The House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee held a hearing on High-Speed Rail and staff is still waiting to see what direction Congress might take on any high-speed rail investments.
- Reports indicate that federal agencies could take action to repeal the Safer Affordable Fuel-Efficient Vehicle Rule, and staff will continue to provide updates on any impacts to the transportation planning process and zero-emission vehicle policy.

No action was taken on this receive and file information item.

## **Discussion Items**

### **6. Fiscal Year 2021-22 Budget Workshop Follow-up**

Anthony Baruch, Section Manager of Financial Planning and Analysis, reported on the following:

- Several questions were raised at the Budget Workshop Preview held on Wednesday, April 28<sup>th</sup>, at the Finance and Administration Committee and the Budget Workshop after the May 10<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting and the handout contains answers to those questions.
- Staff will continue to attend all committee meetings until June 14, 2021 (when the Public Hearing for the Proposed Fiscal Year 2021-22 Budget will take place).
- One-on-one meetings are offered to any Board Members who may want to discuss any topics further.

Director Wagner asked about the word “unplanned” in question six of the handout. Sean Murdock, Director of Finance and Administration, explained that there are planned use of reserves in the budget like purchasing buses and currently, there are no use of reserves without Board of Directors approval.

### **7. Chief Executive Officer's Report**

Darrell E. Johnson, Chief Executive Officer, reported on the following:

- The month of May is halfway through which is Bike month and there are several efforts underway to promote and highlight this. Through the Bike Everywhere campaign, OCTA staff has asked people to pledge to ride their bikes around the neighborhood, to the store, or to work. To date, OCTA has received 725 pledges exceeding the goal of 700 pledges. Those who do pledge will be entered to win prizes and are encouraged to check out [octa.net/bikeeverywheremonth](http://octa.net/bikeeverywheremonth) to find more information.
- Today at 4:00 p.m., OCTA is hosting a Zoom meeting with the community to provide an update on the Interstate 405 (I-405) Improvement Project and the upcoming closure and demolition of the Warner Avenue bridge. The bridge is tentatively scheduled to close on June 1, 2021 with demolition set to follow shortly after.
- The Magnolia Street bridge is scheduled to open on the morning of Saturday, May 22, 2021. This is the first two-phase bridge on the I-405 Improvement Project to fully open to traffic. OCTA is celebrating this milestone with a video that will go live on Saturday, May 22, 2021 on OCTA's YouTube channel under GOOCTA.



**7. (Continued)**

Director Hernandez inquired about the Bike Rally event from the Orange station to the OCTA Headquarters and Mr. Johnson, CEO, stated that the event did not take place in 2020 or 2021 but he does anticipate it returning next year.

**8. Committee Members' Reports**

Director Delgleize asked about any call for funds on bike trails and Mr. Johnson, CEO, responded that once they know what is in the state budget and what gets passed around active transportation, OCTA can then inform the communities about any opportunities.

**9. Closed Session**

There were no Closed Session items scheduled.

**10. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 9:45 a.m.

The next regularly scheduled meeting of this Committee will be held at **9:00 a.m. on Thursday, June 17, 2021**, at the Orange County Transportation Authority Headquarters, Conference Room 07, 550 South Main Street, Orange, California.

ATTEST

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Gene Hernandez  
Committee Vice Chairman

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Sahara Meisenheimer  
Deputy Clerk of the Board