

**MEMORANDUM  
CITY OF LANCASTER, CA**

TO: City Council Members

FROM: Vice Mayor Marvin Crist  
Council Member Sandra Johnson

DATE: November 12, 2013

SUBJECT: **Report on the Activities of the Board of Directors for the Antelope Valley Transit Authority**

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**Recommendation:**

Receive a report of the proceedings and issues discussed at the September 2013 regular Board of Directors meetings of the Antelope Valley Transit Authority (AVTA).

**Background:**

The Antelope Valley Transit Authority is a distinct government entity created under a joint powers authority agreement between the City of Lancaster, the City of Palmdale, and Los Angeles County that provides public transit services. Vice Mayor Marvin Crist serves as the Vice Chair and Council Member Sandra Johnson serves as a Director on the AVTA Board for the City of Lancaster.

The following significant events took place at the September Board meeting:

- **Attendance.** All members were present.
- **Special Report.**
  - BYD Overview. Mr. Brendan Riley, a representative from BYD, presented an overview of the company's three core business areas, the benefits of using electric bus technology and the creation of high-tech manufacturing jobs in the Antelope Valley. A real life demonstration was given on Route 4 using a loaded 40' electric bus to verify the ability of the BYD electric bus to complete the service requirements of a high profile AVTA route.

Mr. Riley noted that after a short period of service and inspection, the BYD 40' ZEB is driving 900 miles per week with minimal maintenance issues during the ongoing Altoona test, which is anticipated to be completed in January, 2014.

The Board requested an update from BYD at the beginning of 2014 including presentation of the results of the Altoona test. The Board discussed the cost of electric buses versus diesel buses. A short news clip regarding BYD establishing a hub in Lancaster was shown. AVTA staff discussed the timeline for various procurement options available to the Authority. Chairman Norm Hickling announced that Supervisor Antonovich has put forth a motion for consideration at

the October 8, 2013 Board of Supervisors (BOS) meeting to give AVTA \$1.9 million for the purchase of two electric buses for a demonstration project.

- Third Quarter Coach Operator Audit Results. The AVTA conducts and independent audit of the Veolia bus drivers in an effort to ensure quality and safe service. Drivers are rated for safety, customer service, announcements of stops, professional attire, etc. The audit indicated one driver received a perfect score, while all drivers are doing well. An area where several drivers can improve is ensuring announcements are made for stops.
- Dial A Ride Customer Survey Results. AVTA conducted a customer usage and satisfaction survey for its Dial A Ride program that serves disabled customers needing curb to curb service. The primary goals of the survey were to identify current customer perceptions about the service, identify areas for improvement, quantify opportunities for mode-shift, and determine the level of customer satisfaction. The most frequently desired service improvement was improving the reservation process. The Board discussed increasing awareness and encouraging the DAR customers to use the fixed route service, and suggested changes to the customer service phone tree. Staff will research the feasibility of obtaining additional phone lines to alleviate system overload when making reservations.
- **Contracts.**
  - The Board approved a sole source contract to OPSEC Specialized Protection for unarmed security guard services in the amount not to exceed \$70,000 per year for five years. The guard will be positioned in the AVTA customer service lobby. The Board briefly discussed the use of an unarmed security guard, but AVTA staff feels this will be enough of a deterrent for the lobby area.
  - The Board discussed the request to purchase fifteen local transit Gillig replacement busses as part of the joint procurement with Contra Costa Transit Authority. This discussion surrounded the priority of the Board to move to electric busses and the consequences of delaying the purchase. The Board approved the acquisition of three busses at this time and requested staff to return to the Board in 30 days with additional information.
- **Policies.**
  - The Board adopted the AVTA Community Room Policy. The Board discussed the ability of small non-profit organizations to obtain a certificate of insurance and requested the executive director to investigate the cost of adding a rider onto AVTA's insurance policy to assist non-profit renters in streamlining the process of obtaining event insurance.