

**MEMORANDUM  
CITY OF LANCASTER, CA**

TO: City Council Members

FROM: Vice Mayor Marvin Crist  
Council Member Sandra Johnson

DATE: December 10, 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 October 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.**
  - The Board received a presentation of the 2013 American Public Transportation Association (APTA) Adwheel Grand Prize and First Prize Awards for Video Presentation and Television Advertisement for the television advertisement/public service announcement – “Feel Like Ridin’” and the video presentation – “Travel Training Video – “How to Plan Your Trip.”
  - The Board received staff’s evaluation of fare evasion and fraud. It was determined free fares are a much larger contributor to the disparity between revenues and ridership than fare evasion and fraud. The number of free fares increased from 31% to 43% since March 2010. The six month fare enforcement period also showed a 29% increase in the amount of farebox cash revenue compared to the same period last year. The increase in cash collected at the farebox is attributable to an increase in overall ridership and fare enforcement efforts. The Board members discussed AVTA’s farebox recovery levels and free ride programs.

- Staff presented an overview of considerations and steps needed to implement electric bus technology into the AVTA's fleet. Chairman Hickling noted that Supervisor Antonovich's recommended prepayment of \$1.9 million to the AVTA for the purchase of two electric buses for its demonstration project was approved at the October 8, 2013 Board of Supervisors meeting.

There is currently a Comprehensive New Model Bus Testing Program in Altoona, Pennsylvania that is designed to promote the production of better transit vehicles and components and to ensure buses are safe and able to withstand the rigors of transit service. Altoona Testing is required on all new model buses before they can be purchased with federal funds and should be completed by January 2014. Staff recommended that AVTA roll out the demonstration project concurrent with en route charging capabilities. Wesley Smith, Chief Development Officer & Founder of Wireless Advanced Vehicle Electrification, Inc. (WAVE), will provide information regarding the application of inductive charging technology at the January 2014 Board meeting.

The AVTA's demonstration project will analyze how well electric buses perform on Antelope Valley's longer than average transit routes during various seasons and weather conditions. The demonstration project will provide information necessary to evaluate the bus's battery life and determine the feasibility of incorporating additional electric buses into the Authority's fleet. The Board discussed additional specifics regarding AVTA's electric bus demonstration project.

- **Contracts.**

- The Board approved a contract in the amount of \$482,000 to MJS Construction Inc. for the phase I AVTA Bus Stop Improvement Program in the City of Lancaster.
- The Board conditionally authorized the Executive Director to issue a Notice to Proceed to Gillig Corporation under Contract Number 2014-12 for the purchase of twelve (12) heavy duty clean diesel buses scheduled for delivery in February 2015 in the amount of \$5.33 million (\$444,006 per bus). The Notice to Proceed shall be issued subject to confirmation of pre-award authority from FTA and shall include a requirement that Gillig notify AVTA in writing prior to incurring any costs associated with assembly and production. This Notice to Proceed is conditional upon the Board taking further action in January 2014. For this action to remain in effect, the Board must recertify this decision in January 2014 after considering a report from staff on the status of alternative bus technology. If the Board does not recertify this action in January 2014, this Notice to Proceed will be rescinded.
- The Board authorized the Executive Director to solicit proposals for federal advocacy services which will assist in securing professional representation at the federal level to ensure AVTA interests are protected as various appropriations bills are drafted.

- **Staffing.**

- The Board authorized the Executive Director to hire a project engineer to oversee AVTA's technology initiatives, such as the electric bus, bus rapid transit and intelligent transportation system projects.