

**Committee Members Present**

Al Murray, Chairman

**Via Teleconference**

Dana Reed, Vice Chairman

Brian MacDonald, Immediate Past Chairman

**Committee Members Absent**

None

**Staff Present**

Gina Ramirez, Deputy Clerk of the Board

Sahara Meisenheimer, Deputy Clerk of the Board

**Via Teleconference**

Donna DeMartino, Managing Director

James Donich, General Counsel

**Call to Order**

The October 22, 2020, Los Angeles - San Diego – San Luis Obispo (LOSSAN) Rail Corridor Agency (Agency) Special Executive Committee meeting was called to order by Chairman Murray at 10:00 a.m. at the Orange County Transportation Authority Headquarters, Conference Room 07, 550 South Main Street, Orange, California.

**Roll Call**

The Deputy Clerk of the Board conducted an attendance Roll Call and announced that there was a quorum of the Executive Committee.

**1. Public Comments**

There were no Public Comments.

**Special Calendar****2. Proposed 2021 Board of Directors and Committee Meetings Calendar**

Chairman Murray opened this item for discussion and proposed adding more Executive Committee Meetings, primarily due to the leadership change in 2021.

Vice Chairman Reed concurred with Chairman Murray's recommendation. He stated the Executive Committee meetings should be held on the first Thursday of each month at 9:00 a.m., with the understanding that if there is no need to meet, the Chair can cancel the meeting.

A motion was made by Chairman Murray, seconded by Vice Chairman Reed, and following a roll call vote, declared passed 3-0, to amend the 2021 Board of Directors and Committee meetings calendar to include the Executive Committee meeting on the first Thursday of each month at 9:00 a.m.

## **Consent Calendar (Item 3)**

### **3. Approval of Minutes**

A motion was made by Immediate Past Chairman MacDonald, seconded by Vice Chairman Reed, and following a roll call vote, declared passed 3-0, to approve the minutes from the June 4, 2020, LOSSAN Executive Committee meeting.

## **Regular Calendar**

There were no Regular Calendar items scheduled.

## **Discussion Items**

### **4. Managing Director's First Six Months and Ongoing Objectives for Fiscal Year 2021-22**

Donna DeMartino, Managing Director (MD), provided a verbal report on:

- Overview of the first 30 days;
- Summary of the 100-day plan;
- Review of the five original goals set for the Managing Director; and
- Preview of upcoming goals.

LOSSAN will continue to work with Amtrak and over the next six months to re-negotiate their contract. Amtrak previously notified LOSSAN that they could not maintain Wi-Fi services on the Pacific Surfliner equipment but have agreed to continue maintenance for one year. LOSSAN staff will need to find a long-term Wi-Fi solution.

Ms. DeMartino stated LOSSAN staff are eager to ensure a seamless fare integration at the Los Angeles Union Station and continue to meet with the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority and Metrolink representatives to coordinate that effort.

Staff will continue to take part with LOSSAN's intercity passenger rail partners to coordinate a possible statewide rebranding effort.

The LOSSAN Agency staff have been meeting with North County Transit District and Metrolink to establish longer-term Rail 2 Rail agreements.

## 4. (Continued)

Staff is excited to announce the launch of the LOSSAN Agency monthly newsletter starting in November. This will be a compilation of staff updates with additional information on ridership, LOSSAN rail corridor projects, media highlights, and more.

As the LOSSAN Agency grows and evolves, staff is enhancing communications and expanding regular updates to keep stakeholders engaged with the LOSSAN Agency's efforts to improve passenger rail ridership, revenue, and on-time performance, operational flexibility, and safety along the corridor.

Vice Chairman Reed complimented and thanked Ms. DeMartino and staff for their efforts.

Immediate Past Chairman MacDonald echoed Vice Chairman Reed's sentiment regarding Ms. DeMartino and the staff.

Chairman Murray thanked the staff for all their hard work while working remotely.

## 5. Budget and Operations Update

Donna DeMartino, MD, provided the background and a timeline on the LOSSAN Agency's fiscal year (FY) 2020-21 and 2021-22 business plan and the FY 2020-21 budget.

Amtrak approved the funding levels of \$5,967,455 for administration and \$1,240,390 for marketing and zero for minor capital projects.

The LOSSAN Agency received approval from the California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA) for the estimated funding necessary to cover the budget. However, CalSTA is only covering the first four months of Amtrak's federal fiscal year operating net expenses. Ms. DeMartino stated that this would cover the period from October 2020 through January 2021.

During the last few months, the LOSSAN Agency identified various cost savings and budget adjustments to lower their administrative budget funding requests from the original proposed \$6,830,782 to just under \$6 million. The budget adjustments reflect the elimination of performance-based increases, delayed hiring of new positions, and identified grant funding to reimburse the direct costs related to some of LOSSAN's administrative positions.

### **5. (Continued)**

LOSSAN staff has estimated to have \$3.3 million in operating reserve funds, as well as \$6.2 million available due to the LOSSAN staff members' excellent work in identifying an Amtrak error that resulted in a credit on Amtrak's books, and an additional \$6 million in surplus operating funds.

If the Amtrak forecasts are accurate, additional state funds or federal funds will be needed during the upcoming fiscal year, most likely, before June 2021, to continue services even at the current levels. A budget amendment will be brought to the Board of Directors (Board) at the November Board meeting to amend the budget through the January 2021 time period.

On the national front, Amtrak ridership is down 80 percent. For the Northeast corridor, ridership is about 25 percent of normal service levels, and long-distance services are at about 50 percent of their normal levels. Amtrak is requesting an additional \$4.9 billion in supplemental federal funds, and Amtrak has implemented temporary service and workforce measures.

Staff will continue to coordinate and monitor ridership and expenses with Amtrak, CalSTA, the California Department of Transportation, or other state-supported services.

Vice Chairman Reed thanked Ms. DeMartino for her thorough report and Chairman Murray complimented Ms. DeMartino and staff for finding the \$6.2 million error.

### **6. Managing Director' Report**

Ms. DeMartino, MD, stated she would be sending out a memo to the Board about continuing the federal fiscal year 2019-20 Amtrak Operating Agreement.

The current Amtrak operating agreement for the federal fiscal year 2019-20 for the Pacific Surfliner passenger rail service operation from October 1, 2019, through September 30, 2020, contains a continuation clause, which allows for the service's continued operation through March 30, 2021, or until a new agreement has been executed.

The LOSSAN Agency and Amtrak have both agreed to exercise the continuation clause, given the short-term operating funding approval by CalSTA, and the potential for additional federal funding support that could affect payments to Amtrak. There is no action required by the LOSSAN Agency Board to use this continuation clause. Staff does not anticipate any amendments to the agreement for increased funding capacity through March 30, 2021, if current revenue and expense trends continue.

**7. Committee Members' Reports**

Immediate Past Chairman MacDonald is looking forward to a normal life after this pandemic.

Chairman Murray stated it has been a challenging year and is glad to hear that everyone is staying safe.

**8. Closed Session**

There were no Closed Session items scheduled.

**9. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:37 a.m.

The next regularly scheduled meeting of this Committee will be held:

**Thursday, November 5, 2020**

9:00 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.

Orange County Transportation Authority Headquarters

Conference Room 07

550 South Main Street

Orange, California

ATTEST

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Gina Ramirez  
LOSSAN Agency  
Deputy Clerk of the Board

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Al Murray  
LOSSAN Agency Chairman