

**Caltrain Centralized Equipment Maintenance and Operations Facility
Monitoring Committee
November 28, 2007 Minutes**

Members Present: Kay Gutknecht, Art Lloyd, Councilmember Pierluigi Oliverio, Michael Riepe, Michael Smith (Chair),

Members Absent: Councilmember Sam Liccardo,

Staff Present: Michelle Bouchard, Nancy McKenna, David Olmeda, Joe Siino, Jonah Weinberg

Attendees: Judy McDowell (College Park Rep), Nicholas Rice-Sanchez (Councilmember Oliverio's office), Representative from Councilmember Kansen Chu's office, Ben Tripousis (City of San Jose)

Chair Smith called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes from the August 21, 2007 meeting were approved (Lloyd/Riepe).

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

STAFF REPORT

Jonah Weinberg spoke about meetings with less than a quorum. Mr. Weinberg said the JPB's legal counsel had advised that if there is not a quorum the committee needs to recognize themselves as a "Committee as a Whole." This would allow them to continue discussing agenda items. The attorneys, though, recommend that the meeting be cancelled as to not lead to conversations outside of the meeting with members that were not in attendance, which could violate the Brown Act. Ben Tripousis stated that the San Jose City Attorney is in agreement with JPB's legal counsel. Kay Gutknecht feels that the City and JPB are preventing the committee from meeting, due to the quorum issue and also staff is preventing the meetings from occurring due to the alternate issue. Mr. Weinberg reiterated that the restrictions are set forth in the Brown Act and Bylaws and that to disregard this would be illegal.

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Chair Smith and Michael Riepe were at CEMOF for the acoustic testing and the night washing. Joe Siino turned on the washer at night for them to hear. Mr. Riepe and Ms. Gutknecht went over to CEMOF last week when all the noise was occurring. CEMOF open house on September 29 was very impressive. Facility looked

great and congratulations to staff. Chair Smith, Ms. Gutknecht and Mr. Riepe attended the Shasta Hanchett homeowners meeting in hopes of finding replacements for outgoing members. Chair Smith was appointed to represent the Shasta Hanchett neighborhood and he has started advertising for an at-large member in the local newspapers.

Councilmember Oliverio arrived at 6:21 p.m.

Brown Act training still scheduled for April 2008 meeting.

COMMITTEE REPORT

Ms. Gutknecht spoke about the e-mail she sent regarding the noise. She and Mr. Riepe said they could hear the noise and bell ringing from inside their homes.

Ms. Gutknecht went over to the facility and went towards the cement factory by College Park; she observed constant bell ringing for 20 minutes and a loud engine noise when the train reversed direction. She called the hotline to complain, and said that the hotline people knew nothing about CEMOF and were not very helpful. Mr. Weinberg responded by saying that the line goes directly to the Customer Service Center during business hours and after hours goes to a call center and provides the information to staff the next morning. Ms. Gutknecht expressed very concern about the noise from the trainwasher in the event of an inversion layer.

Mr. Riepe went south by the Lenzen entrance and he observed the source of noise as a 3-4 train consists on the storage tracks all with locomotives running. Michelle Bouchard said the locomotives are put on ground power after 45 minutes.

OLD BUSINESS

Item 8E – Bylaw Status - Councilman Pierliugi Oliverio said they have been submitted to the city attorney's office, but the city attorney is concerned by the issue of alternates, which would let someone vote who is not an elected official. Chair Smith asked if they are going to offer corrections for the committee to make. Councilmember Oliverio said he hoped they would. Chair Smith is very concerned with the alternate issue since the city and JPB will not allow alternates, but possibly the neighborhood association can have alternates. Councilmember Oliverio hoped to have an answer after closed session next Tuesday.

Item 8F - Scheduled maintenance and daily inspections at night – David Olmeda said locomotives will be checked at night along the service and inspection (S&I) track. Upon completion of inspection train goes north to the train wash and then parked. Staff has given Amtrak instructions to put on ground power if being parked for over 45 minutes. The equipment parked at night is now on ground power. Ms. Gutknecht asked what this all means. Mr. Olmeda said that while the train is parked for over 45 minutes the equipment will either shutdown or “plugged in” to electricity, to run the lights and other

systems. If the train will be dispatched within 45 minutes the train will idle. Mr. Olmeda said that parking the equipment is not like parking a car and train crews are new to a yard they need to learn the new system.

Ms. Bouchard explained that the reason for the bell ringing noise is to indicate to people that there is train movement. As required by FRA regulations, staff will see if there are any ways to reduce bell ringing, but it cannot be eliminated. Ms. Gutknecht said the bell ringing issue is outside the soundwall, which is where the trainwasher is, and asked why there isn't a wall by the washer. Mr. Olmeda said that at the exit of the trainwash there is an overpass and it would be physically impossible to put a soundwall there to join the other soundwall. Chair Smith asked about a curfew on train washer.

Ms. Gutknecht again expressed concern about the noise if there is an inversion layer, particularly in the spring and summer when neighbors open their windows. Mr. Riepe asked if there are any other alternatives to the bell ringing. Ms. Bouchard said that as of now there are no alternates to this issue, as it is a general safety issue.

Councilmember Oliverio agreed with the safety issue and the bell ringing, and asked if there is discretion of how long the bell rings. Ms. Bouchard said that federal regulations require an engineer to use the bell when the train is moving in the yard, and to use the horn when they see the need. Councilmember Oliverio hopes that as staff becomes more comfortable and familiar with the facility the amount of bell ringing will subside.

Ms. Gutknecht asked about the use of electric car movers to reduce bell noise. Mr. Olmeda said the car mover is not designed to move an entire train with the locomotive. It doesn't have the weight and would derail the car mover. The car mover is designed to move two cars and a locomotive. It was never the intent to take entire train sets through the yard. Chair Smith asked if there is any way to reduce noise when redirecting from the train washer. Mr. Olmeda said it is an issue of train handling, and that staff can talk to Amtrak about this, but the yard has a 10 mph speed limit. Chair Smith asked who move the trains in the yard. Mr. Olmeda said the "pin-up" crew handles most of the train movements in the yard.

Item 8G – Train Wash Operation at Night – Ms. Gutknecht said the train windows are not very clean for having a trainwash. If the blower noise becomes an issue the committee is suggesting a curfew. Staff has not received any complaints on this issue.

Item 8D – Screeching Tracks/Lubricator Maintenance – Art Lloyd said he has not been able to reach anyone at UP. UP has purposed an alternate method for lubricating the tracks. Ms. Bouchard wants to go to other properties to see if this will work, as she does not know the duration of this product and can not make a decision. She doesn't think the rail lubricator is the issue, the problem is the maintenance. Mr. Lloyd and Ms. Bouchard will be meeting with UP management on Friday. Chair Smith asked for an update after that meeting. Chair Smith asked if he is in Brown Act violation if he forwards the e-mail from Ms. Bouchard, and Mr. Weinberg said he can forward, but no discussion may occur from this e-mail.

Item 8H – Overnight Storage of Early Morning Trains – the first train out of CEMOF is 5 a.m. Four trains and the Capital Corridor are being stored at Diridon.

Item 8A – Construction Status – Joe Siino said construction is completed and just working with clean-up issues. Fuel tanks are in and being inspected. Fueling project set to go on line the first of the year. First fuel after Christmas and will turn over to operations.

Ms. Gutknecht asked about the schedule for electrification. Ms. Bouchard explained that Caltrain is working with the FRA to get a waiver to operate lighter weight EMUs, and that the expected time for electrification is still 2013-14.

8B Transition Status – Mr. Olmeda said the daytime maintenance from San Francisco moved into CEMOF yesterday, and they are making adjustments to the daily cleaning which will be the last phase and review personnel for the different shifts. The shifts are already in place and they may reallocate personnel to ensure work is done.

Ms. Gutknecht asked what the train load is. Ms. Bouchard said every train that is planned to store at CEMOF is now stored there. Ms. Bouchard also explained that Caltrain is getting eight more cars and will adjust the consists, and that the service will increase from 96 trains to 98 trains in March, to provide hourly service at night.

8C – Committee Tour – it was suggested to do the tour after the new members joined the committee in April.

Art Lloyd left at 7:30 p.m.

NEW BUSINESS

Membership status – Nancy McKenna informed the committee that letters will be sent to all the necessary neighborhood associations, the JPB and the City advising them of the members appointment expiring and that a new rep needs to be appointed.

Chair Smith would like to have a sub-committee of Mr. Riepe, Ms. Gutknecht and himself to review applicants for the at-large committee and bring a recommendation to committee for an appointment for the at-large position.

Approval of meeting calendar – this item was approved by all the members.

Ben Tripousis has requested that the meetings be moved from City Hall now that construction has been completed. He suggested that the meetings be moved to Caltrain property.

At the January meeting an at-large member will be voted in and elections of officers.

Ms. Gutknecht would like recommendation on the hotline issue. Mr. Weinberg said the hotline was for emergency issues and not for standard operating procedure issues. There is not a way for individuals to call in to the CEMOF site and stop regular maintenance from taking place. Ms. Bouchard asked if we contacted the hotline call center and reminded them of CEMOF, and Mr. Weinberg said this had been done. Ms. Gutknecht asked if she can send e-mail instead of calling when she hears loud noise. Mr. Weinberg said that an e-mail can be sent from the Caltrain Website. Ms. Gutknecht said that she doesn't want to go through the Web she wants an e-mail address. Mr. Weinberg explained that if she calls Monday-Friday between 6 a.m. - 10 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday between 8 a.m. – 8 p.m. she would get a customer service representative who will take the information, which is tracked and registered in the Customer Service database. Mr. Weinberg said that Ms. McKenna will e-mail the committee the link to make on-line comments about Caltrain, including CEMOF related issues.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

None

Meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

2008 Meeting Dates: January 23, April 23, July 23, October 22