EMPLOYMENT POLICY

District to Offer Jobs to Key System Personnel Except Executive Officials

The more than 1,500 bus drivers, mechanics, clerks and other workers employed by Key System will be offered jobs by the transit district when the public agency goes into operation.

Transit directors this month adopted a personnel policy that assures most of Key System's workers their present jobs when the district takes over operation from the private carrier next summer.

William J. Bettencourt, chairman of the board's administration committee which made the recommendation following several weeks of study, said that the policy making executives of Key System are not included.

"It is not our intention to hire those Key System officials who have determined company policy," Bettencourt said. These positions include the company president, vice president and controller.

Supervisory Personnel

By law, the district will be required to offer employment to most of the drivers, mechanics and other workers if the district takes over the Key operation. Employment of supervisory employees, however, is left to the discretion of the transit directors.

In announcing its decision, the board specifically reserved the right to make such personnel adjustments "as seem necessary to properly serve the public" after the district gets into operation.

Later Adjustments

"In other words," Bettencourt said, "the policy will not necessarily blanket in all supervisory employees, but where possible and desirable present Key System supervisors will be retained."

In a special report to the board, General Manager John R. Worthington urged adoption of the policy statement, declaring it would only be "good sense and economics to secure as much of our required staff and personnel from the ranks of present Key System personnel as possible."

"Practically all of the employees required are in a skilled category," he said, adding that the cost of training new personnel if the district attempted to build up and train an independent work force would involve additional expenses of between $1,000,000 and $2,000,000.

"The employment of Key System operating personnel will insure an experienced organization that also will permit take-over with as little disruption of service and management as possible," he said.
Big Tax Refunds Due Richmond Industries

Tax refunds due Richmond and San Pablo taxpayers which were incorrectly collected for the transit district amount to $37,000.

Largest single refund of $11,607 is due Standard Oil Company of California. Twenty industries in the two cities claim the bulk of the total amount, collectively qualifying for $18,952. Included in the district in the formation of public money. The District authorities are now obligated to provide such safeguards.

What the Editors Are Saying About Transit

District Expected to Live Up to Election Pledges

Approval of a bond issue to establish a publicly owned and operated transit system in the East Bay is a forward step toward the eventual solution of our strangle traffic congestion problem.

By approving the program of the Alameda-Contra Costa Transit District, the people have placed a definite responsibility on its directors and staff. The responsibility weighs heavily because, for the first time in this area, a bond issue has been approved by a simple majority vote under authorization of the State Legislature. Always before, the required two-thirds majority has been an effective safeguard against unwise or unjustified expenditures of public money. The District authorities are now obligated to provide such safeguards.

The District officials presented a detailed plan, calling for the purchase of new equipment and widespread improvement and expansion of service. They promised that the price to be paid for properties to be bought from Key System Transit Lines would be established by the California Public Utilities Commission, an entirely disinterested agency.

In addition, the District, advanced, and the public accepted, engineers' opinions that the service improvements can be made without increasing fares or taxes.

The public has the right to expect this to be regarded as a pledge, and to anticipate that the entire program, as outlined, will be carried out expeditiously and efficiently.

Bond Opinion Poll Close

A public opinion poll conducted in Alameda County a month prior to the recent transit bond election came close to 100 per cent accuracy.

The telephone survey, made by Raeburn and Associates in connection with a poll on other local issues, and conducted independently of the district, indicated that 57.5 per cent of those questioned were in favor of the bond measure. Final tabulation of the ballots showed voters supported the issue by a margin of 56.3 per cent—a difference with the pre-election estimate of only 1.2 per cent.

Winslow Engineering Executive Appointed Head of District Accounting and Finances

John F. Larson, chief financial officer for the world-wide Winslow Engineering and Manufacturing Co., has been appointed controller of the Alameda-Contra Costa Transit District.

Larson, 58, was named to the $15,000 a year post by transit General Manager John R. Worthington.

The new transit official formerly was treasurer and controller of the Winslow firm and its subsidiary corporations headquartered in Oakland. The concern, with factories in Kentucky and France, is one of the leading manufacturers of industrial filters and pioneered the field of filters for aircraft under the leadership of founder Charles A. Winslow.

Worthington, in announcing the appointment, said Larson will have responsibility for all district financial and accounting matters, including the handling of the $16,900,000 transit bond issue recently approved by the voters.

Prior to joining Winslow in 1953, Larson served as treasurer and controller of a major Los Angeles power transmission and bearing distributing firm. During World War II, he headed up the accounting department of the California Shipbuilding Corp. which turned out well over $500,000,000 in ship contracts during the war years.

Larson has been associated since 1940 with Laborde and Hoover, a certified public accounting firm of Berkeley. His previous two assignments were at their direction.

Larson's civic activities include Ashme Temple of the Shrine of which he serves as auditing committee chairman. He resides in Oakland at 4759 Lincoln Ave. with his wife, Jennie, also an accountant. Mrs. Larson's civic activities include treasurer of the women's auxiliary of the Salvation Army's Booth Memorial Hospital.

John F. Larson
State PUC to Determine Key System Value for District

Public Hearings to Begin This Month on Condemnation Suit to Purchase Key Equipment and Property

Public hearings will open up this month on the transit district's multi-million dollar condemnation suit against Key System. The transit district wants to buy some of Key's equipment to get into business.

Sitting as final judge over the proceedings will be the California Public Utilities Commission—the state agency considered best qualified to come up with a fair and impartial price tag.

The transit district wants to buy some of Key's equipment and real estate to round out facilities needed by the district to get into business.

District officials hope to commence operation sometime next year. The district expects to completely replace Key's local and transbay service except in Richmond and San Pablo which presently are not part of the district.

For more than a year, PUC staff engineers have been taking inventory and fixing values on Key facilities desired by the district. Their findings will be made public during the hearings beginning December 17.

Both Key and the district may dispute the staff-computed values. But once the commission sets the final figure, it cannot be changed, except for adjustments to reflect an increase or decrease in values since the condemnation suit was filed in May of 1958. Should Key decline to accept the PUC value, the district could request superior court action to enforce the order.

Consultants Estimate Maximum Price

A total of $9,600,000 has been allowed by district financial consultants as the outside price for Key facilities contained in the condemnation suit.

Money paid to Key would come from a $16,500,000 bond issue recently approved by the voters. The remaining $6,900,000 is earmarked for 300 new Transit Liner motor coaches, a new division terminal in Hayward plus contingencies involved in the acquisition of new equipment.

Prospect and Delay in Early Delivery Date

The number of new ultramodern Transit Liner motor coaches that will be placed into operation when the transit district takes over from Key System will depend on how soon the district gets into business.

General Manager John R. Worthington told a meeting of the board of directors this month that if the district commences operation by July 1 of next year, the maximum number of coaches that could be expected for initial use is 25.

Production schedules of one of the major manufacturers already are filled through next July, he said. In any event, when the district takes over there will be no disruption in service, Worthington said. New lines, extensions and other improvements will be handled as quickly as possible, with most of the major changes to be gradually and systematically placed into effect within six months after commencing operation.

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Street Clearance—Work crews with heavy equipment remove abandoned inter-urban rails on Twelfth Street formerly used by Oakland’s tansbay “A” line. Key System, which is paying costs of track removal, is ahead of its commitment schedule which promises to have all tracks cleared from East Bay streets by April, 1961.

Key Ahead of Track Removal Schedule

The removal of remaining abandoned transbay train tracks in Berkeley and Oakland is proceeding ahead of schedule and should be completed prior to the deadline of April, 1961.

In Berkeley, the entire removal program is expected to be completed by January or February of next year.

Work still to be completed in Berkeley includes a section of Shattuck Avenue between Dwight Way and Ward Street, and the portion of Claremont Avenue between Alcatraz and Domingo Avenues.

Crews are currently removing the abandoned “A” train tracks in Oakland on 12th Street between Jefferson and Union Streets.

Other tracks remaining are on portions of Piedmont Avenue, Claremont Avenue, 55th Street, Lakeshore Avenue, West Grand Avenue and Adeline Street.

The current removal program, which initially was estimated to cost a total of approximately $750,000, is being carried out by Key System Transit Lines.

Key System has promised in an agreement with the City of Oakland to have all tracks removed by April of 1961.

Copeland Cites Better Public Transit as A Benefit to the Automobile Driver, Too

Substantially improved public transportation will benefit not only the transit rider but every driver of an automobile throughout the East Bay.

This was the prediction of Robert M. Copeland, transit district director and retired civil engineer, who recently told members of the Oakland Presbyterian Men’s Club:

“Better transit is just as important—even vital—to the motorist, the businessman and the homeowner as it is to the transit rider.”

Experience elsewhere throughout the country has repeatedly shown that the improved transit service planned for the East Bay will definitely attract more riders, Copeland said. Many of these new riders will be former auto drivers.

“Without transit, our streets and freeways would be hopelessly and unreasonably inadequate,” he said.

“But if we improve the quality and speed of our public transit system, more people will use the service, congestion will be partly eliminated, and there will be more room for those people who continue to drive their cars.”

“Far the East Bay resident who continues to drive his car, this fact is of major importance,” he said.

The transit official cited recent experience in Philadelphia where, during the first week of operating a new freeway express line, patronage increased almost 50 per cent.

The new service clipped about 16 minutes from the former street route and represents a time savings of about 35 per cent, Copeland said.

“This single new express line has actually eliminated hundreds of automobiles from Philadelphia streets each day, and obviously has provided considerable relief from traffic congestion in the particular section of the city,” he added.

A key part of the East Bay district’s plan is the start of five new express lines linking communities between El Cerrito and Hayward. The new routes, utilizing freeways wherever possible, will produce expected time savings of up to 50 per cent over existing travel time.

Speaker Programs Telling Progress of District Plans For Operation Available

Two educational programs have been developed by the transit district to keep East Bay citizens informed on the progress of plans to begin operation of a publicly-owned transit system.

Both speaker programs are available free of charge for luncheon meetings as well as for groups holding their meetings during the morning, afternoon or evening hours.

One utilizes a 25-minute color motion picture, “Let’s Go to Town,” which shows improvements that are taking place throughout the country with regard to public transit.

The second program consists of a series of descriptive charts which graphically describe the East Bay’s problems of moving people and the steps being taken to solve them.

The district also publishes a monthly information bulletin, “Transit Times,” which is available through the mail free of charge.

For further information, please contact the transit district at 700 Plaza Building, 506 15th Street, Oakland, telephone TEMplebar 6-1808.
At its regular meeting December 2, 1959, the Board of Directors:

- Referred a request by the Richmond and San Pablo Transit Study Committee, asking information on costs of providing bus service, to the General Manager for study and reply to the board, on motion of Director Copeland.

- Endorsed the use of exhaust control devices on motor coaches as soon as such devices are available and practicable, and directed the General Manager to prepare a report on the current status of preventive smog devices now under study, on motion of Director Copeland.

- Approved a policy statement favoring retention of Key System personnel other than the general officers, on motion of Director Bettencourt. (Details, Page 1.)

- Adjourned meeting to January 4, 1960, at 4:30 p.m. in the district offices to elect officers of the board of directors for the new year.

Support to Eliminate Smog Promised

The transit district has pledged all-out action to eliminate smog-producing exhausts by its fleet of motor coaches just as soon as practical devices are available.

A resolution recently adopted by the Bay Area Air Pollution Control District asked the transit district to specify effective and efficient exhaust control devices on all new buses to be purchased.

Transit directors said they are in agreement that such devices be used on district equipment just as soon as they are available and can be acquired at a reasonable cost.

General Manager John R. Worthington was also instructed to investigate the relative contribution to smog that is made by a motor coach fleet as compared to autos carrying the equivalent number of travelers.