Board of Directors
Pledge Top Transit System in Nation

Directors of AC Transit entered their New Year on a note of vision in developing the nation's finest public transportation system.

A pledge to plan and operate an "intelligent, progressive transit system" was voiced by Director William J. Bettencourt as he took office as new president of the board.

Bettencourt, 43, an executive with Frieden, Inc., and a San Leandro civic leader, was unanimously elected to the board presidency by his fellow directors in a year-end change of officers.

Retiring from the office was Robert K. Barber of Kensington, who served two years as head of the board.

Col. Robert M. Copeland of Kensington, retired Army engineer, was elected vice president.

Seated on the board for the first time at the January 4 meeting was William E. Berk, Richmond business executive.

Berk, chairman of the board of the Richmond Redevelopment Agency and member of the board of the Richmond Housing Authority, received his oath of office during brief ceremonies and promised full cooperation with the goals of the district.

Barber and William H. Coburn, Jr., of

125 New Buses to Join Streamlined Transbay Fleet

First of 125 new buses purchased to improve and revitalize local East Bay transit lines were being shipped this month, making January another high point in AC Transit progress.

Paving the way for the arrival of the "Transit Liners" was an earlier shipment of another 17 deluxe suburban liners.

The initial delivery of 40 streamlined suburban coaches was completed the first week in January, supplying basic service on 13 transbay lines. The coming shipment brings the suburban fleet to 57 new motor coaches.

The big local buses, like the suburban liners, carry out the colorful, streamlined "new look" and are expected to give area riders a new and rewarding reason for switching to public transportation.

Arrival of the first air-conditioned suburban motor coaches set off a civic welcome that included a parade, a historical exhibit and opportunities for public inspection.

Timeliness of the arrival in the middle of the holiday season also turned AC Transit into a Santa Claus, as the plush coaches rolled into service early Christmas morning—a special holiday gift to the 940,000 residents of the district.

The first bus appropriately was
Policy Makers

The Board of Directors of the Alameda-Contra Costa Transit District

1961

William E. Berk
Member

William J. Bettencourt
President

Robert M. Copeland
Vice President

Robert K. Barber
Member

William H. Coburn, Jr.
Member

Paul E. Deadrich
Member

John McDonnell
Member
Ceremonies Launch First of New ‘Liners’

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wrapped in red cellophane like a shiny Christmas package, with Santa on hand to make the symbolic delivery.

Opening “the package” in brief ribbon cutting ceremonies at Emeryville yards was Robert K. Barber, retiring district board president. Board Directors Robert M. Copeland, William H. Coburn, Jr., John McDonell and William J. Betten-court also were present.

The first “Transit Liner” to enter operation left the Emeryville yard at 12:25 a.m., on Line A, while the rest of the buses, colorful symbols of the district’s Christmas present to its riders, moved into service on the other transbay routes during the early morning.

The public had its first chance to see their transportation of the future in a “Travelcade of Progress” that moved throughout the district on the Thursday before Christmas.

In Oakland, the parade was paced by the last of the area’s original horse cars. Pulled along at a fast clip by two black Missouri mules, the parade rolled up Broadway to give viewers a look at transit of the past and future.

In the line were a cable car; Model A Ford bus, vintage of 1928; one of the pre-war Key System buses that will be retired by the new equipment, and a glittering string of brand new motor coaches.

Heading the parade, in a special “sleigh,” was Santa Claus.

The motorized section continued to Berkeley, Albany, San Pablo and Richmond, then doubled back to Alameda, East Oakland, San Leandro, Hayward and San Lorenzo.

Riders got a closer view the following Friday and Saturday, as the buses were put on public display in various locations throughout the district and in San Francisco.

Bus operators were specially briefed in advance to explain the equipment and point out special features, unmatched by any other transit operation on the Pacific Coast.

Drivers also handed out brochures welcoming the viewers and explaining in detail the comfort and safety features of the new coaches.

The unveiling of the buses was heralded by newspapers, radio and television, both as news events and as special features, ranging from the unloading to reactions of first passengers.

The bright new fleet, in district colors of white, silver, Tahoe turquoise and persimmon orange, is being matched by identically painted older equipment. Some 34 former Key System buses already have been repainted and refurbished to serve with the new “Transit Liners.”
Transportation Exhibit Covers Colorful Era from Horse Car to Streamlined Buses

A transportation exhibit, covering the colorful years that has taken the East Bay from steam train and horse car to the "new look" of swift, smooth motor coaches, was attracting record visitors this month at the Oakland Main Library.

The exhibit was arranged by the California Railway Historical Society and AC Transit to commemorate the arrival of the first of a fleet of 250 new "Transit Liner" coaches.

The collection includes relics prized by railfans and of equal interest to those who remember ferry boat days, the old Key System trains, the Southern Pacific "Red Trains," the trolleys, cable cars and horse cars of an era past.

A pictorial history of area transportation, one of the largest in East Bay history, depicts a graphic story of progress. The photographs, on panels and in wall cabinets, are further highlighted by scale models of early Key System streetcars and trains.

An operating model of a steam plant, made in Germany near the turn of the century and an old calendar, fashioned in the replica of a streetcar and issued in 1902 by Oakland Traction Company, one of the predecessors of Key System, also have been included.

Other models feature the San Francisco Ferry Building and the old Key System Pier. Both are of special interest to one of the viewers, D. J. Potter, general superintendent of transportation for AC Transit and a veteran transportation official. His father, James P. Potter, was superintendent of the Key Route when one of the predecessors of Key System, in 1902 by Oakland Traction Company, served to introduce the fleet of new suburban transit liners. The executive described the super-deluxe motor coaches and explained how the improvement is expected to increase traffic and area business profits in general.

"By making it easier and speedier to ride in public transit rather than private car," Worthington said the district expects sufficient increase in transbay patronage would result in $2,000,000 a year more revenue to the district, he added.

Worthington also stressed customer accessibility to the central business district as greatest single force affecting business profits.

East Bay to Lead Nation in Equipment

With the finest equipment in the country, the East Bay will be riding high by April on the nation's best motor coach transit system, according to AC Transit General Manager John R. Worthington.

"By mid-January all basic service on transbay lines will be provided with new coaches. The next month, more new buses will arrive for use in local service. In all, 250 "transit liners," costing almost $7.7 million, will be in service by spring."
At an adjourned regular meeting December 20, 1960, the Board of Directors:
• Agreed to meet January 10, 1961, to review salaries of non-union district personnel, on motion of Director McDonnell.
• Voted to meet January 5, 1961, to consider possible changes in Transit District Law, on motion of Vice President Bettencourt.
• Authorized $5,000 offer to Russell Beninger, head of Beninger Transportation Service, in settlement for loss of Richmond-El Sobrante line when district commenced new service in that area, on motion of Vice President Bettencourt.
• Curtailed size of exterior advertising posters on new fleet of “Transit Liners,” on motion of Vice President Bettencourt.

At the regular meeting January 4, 1961, the Board of Directors:
• Elected Director Bettencourt president of board, on motion of Director McDonnell; and elected Director Copeland vice president of the board, on motion of Director Coburn.

At an adjourned regular meeting January 5, 1961, the Board of Directors:
• Considered several amendments to the Transit District Law and referred them to Attorney Nisbet for wording and further consideration at a later date.

At an adjourned regular meeting January 10, 1961, the Board of Directors:
• Referred to Committee on Finance a study of salaries for non-union district personnel, on motion of Director Barber.

Santa Clara Picks Up Tab On New Bus Lines Service

The City of Santa Clara is covering any losses on two new bus routes as result of an unusual subsidy agreement with San Jose City Lines.

The contract enabled the bus company to establish two new lines between major neighborhoods and downtown shopping areas.

City officials will pay for losses for at least a six-month trial period. If patronage increases, the subsidy could continue until the lines become self-supporting, according to terms of the agreement.