Directors Approve Operating Budget, Explore Methods of Financing Deficit

A tax increase, a fare hike—or both—faced the District this month as directors studied ways to meet increased operating costs and balance a deficit budget.

Transit directors adopted a budget of $17,433,800 for the new fiscal year—4.6 percent higher than estimated expenditures. The increase was attributed mainly to spiraling labor costs.

The budget allows for an expected 3.2 percent increase in revenue, not enough to cover boosted labor expense, according to John F. Larson, treasurer-controller.

The district's labor bill is up 6.5 percent over the year just ended, he added. Labor expenses account for 82 percent of the operating budget or 71.6 percent of the total budget, which also includes bond debt service and equipment and building replacement.

The budget leaves an estimated deficit of $861,500, which is equivalent to a tax increase of 4.3 cents, Larson said. Present tax rate for the district is 12.5 per $100 of assessed valuation.

The Board, which has until the end of next month to set the tax rate, also is studying the impact upon revenues of various alternate changes in the fare structure.

AC Transit expects to carry more passengers than ever during the year, with a rider estimate of 53,200,000. Previously, the District relied on (Continued on Page 2)
DIAL 377 — Mrs. Dale Layne follows posted directions, makes use of free telephone at Latham Square shelter to get bus riding information from attendant Sidney Baldwin, at other end of line.

It's a Direct Line to Transit Information

A free, bus-information telephone was installed by AC Transit this month at the Latham Square shelter, 16th St. and Telegraph Ave., Oakland, giving customers another "first" in help and courtesy.

The telephone, in a niche on the inside of the northeast corner, is connected with Transit Information at the Emeryville Division. To find out what bus to take, where to board, time points or other traveling information, callers just follow directions to "dial 377."

Increased Costs Topple Revenue Balance

(Continued from Page 1)

Operating revenues to defray operational expenses, while property tax support was utilized for bond service and the purchase of new equipment. That balance has been toppled by higher wages and increased fringe benefits, Ray H. Rinehart, chairman of the finance committee, noted.

Revenue must be augmented by either additional taxes or a fare increase — or both, he declared.

The current tax rate would be hiked to 16.8 cents if taxes are increased.

Business activity showed an increase during May, with passenger revenue and the number of riders carried on the upturn for the period.

Passenger revenue totaled $1,181,028, an increase of $89,049 or 8.2 per cent over the $1,091,979 collected in May, 1965. Riders carried on East Bay and Transbay lines reached 4,485,783, up 1.06 per cent over the 4,438,535 who used District service in May, a year ago.

Commute book sales also were up for the month, totaling $183,320, a 8.1 per cent increase over year-ago sales of $169,619. The District operated 1,956,086 miles of scheduled service, up 55,510 miles or 2.9 per cent over the previous May figure of 1,900,576 miles. Operational expenses totaled $1,246,922, an increase of $90,264 or 7.8 per cent over expenses of $1,156,658 in May, 1965.

Total income of $1,489,966 was sufficient to cover operational costs and bond debt requirements.

Service Improvements Given Green Light

Service improvements, approved by the Board of Directors, include:

- Extension of Line 57 (MacArthur Blvd.) to Hegenberger Rd. industrial area and new Oakland Coliseum.
- Continuation of Saturday service on Line 91, Castro Valley Hayward.
- Routings of school trips on Line 68 (Roosevelt Ave.) from El Monte area to Adams Junior High, El Cerrito.
- Rerouting of some trips on Line 51 to new Berkeley Marina and heliport.

Changes will become effective with new sign-up of operators September 4.
How to Cast Upon the Waters

The day that Anthony Perry, Sr., decided to learn how to "fly cast to catch more fish" also was the day that fishing was nudged out of first place by a new interest.

Perry, a tournament casting expert of noted ability, still pursues the wily trout — and catches them — but not as the average hatchery trout amateur.

No backlash here!

Perry, swing shift foreman of the maintenance department at Emeryville Division, can not only lay a fly just where he wants it, he's acquired an outdoor hobby of top intrigue.

He figures all the fishing done in the years before he dropped in at the Oakland Casting Club headquarters at McCrae Memorial Park, Carson St. and Mountain Blvd., "just wasted time."

First Time Out

"I wanted to learn how to cast, so they put me in a tournament."

Perry made 68 hits out of 100 on his first try — an excellent score on a first event.

He's been an enthused tournament participant since.

"Tournament casting is a bigger thrill than catching a fish. I never get tired of it. It's a real challenge and a lot of fun," Perry explains as he whips a rippling snake cast.

With a smooth flip of the wrist, he can whirl out the double haul, a roll cast, or put the fly through a right turn or a left - whatever is needed to drop the lure just where he wants it.

In tournament casting, participants try to hit 10 rings and Perry is back at the casting pools now, practicing three afternoons a week to gain that "greatest of thrills," hitting a perfect 100 point score in competition — 10 points for each ring.

All-around champion of dry fly and wet fly casting in 1963, Perry had to put away his rods while he was working as a day leadman. When he was boosted to swing shift foreman a year ago, he was able to get to the practicing which he hopes will work him up again to one of the top spots in tournament circles.

It's all in the timing, according to Perry, and "anybody can do it. It's a wonderful, relaxing sport."

Perry, who combines fly tying and rod repairing with his interest in casting, is particularly proud of being certified by the American Casting Association as a casting instructor.

One of the members of a transit "dynasty," Perry went to work for Key System in 1945. His uncle, the late John Perry, retired after putting in 34 years on the property. A brother, Frank Perry, left after 14 years. A son, Anthony, works now at the Richmond Division as a cleaner.

The "casting Perry" makes his home at 922 Halcyon Dr., San Leandro.

Target Ahead — Anthony Perry, Sr., swing shift foreman and tournament casting enthusiast, flies a fly on target.

Drivers Top Record

Safety records were shattered by Richmond Division in July, with 16,847 miles per accident, and by Emeryville drivers, with 13,417 miles per accident, resulting in traditional treat of coffee and doughnuts. Goal is 12,600 miles per accident.

It's Flaps Down for 'Voice in the Night' As Injury Catches Up With Dispatcher

A hole he stepped in 30 years ago has caught up with Benjamin "Bert" Walden, grounding him before he had time to carry out all his plans to let the wheels go rolling.

Bert retired from Central Dispatch and 43 years of transit experience effective July 1, but took off on vacation time in May to start some of that traveling.

He was spryly racing his wife and a friend to a cabin in Price, Utah, when the Achilles tendon in his left leg "snapped just like that."

The injury, which will keep him cast-bound at home, 2526 Taylor Ave., Oakland, for a few weeks, actually dates back to an accident at the old Key Route Inn in Oakland, according to Walden.

Rushing over to push the button which would halt the wig-wag crossing signal, Walden stepped into a hole.

"I hit the side of the building; my foot went sideways and the tendon broke then."

The doctor says now it was never fixed right and didn't heal. It could have snapped again any time, but it's sure inconvenient to have it happen as soon as you retire.

Walden figures he still kept his promise "to get out before I was 66...my birthday was June 24. I always said I wouldn't go on working after 66...and as soon as this shank is better, we're going to travel again."

Walden, called "Cliff" — his middle name — by his family, acquired the nickname of "Bert" after he started to work for the Key System as a street car operator in 1923.

When he switched to trains, C. N. Andersen, at that time train director and later, vice president in charge of operations, got him mixed up with Bert Wilson.

"I've answered to 'Bert' ever since," Walden explains.

He worked as a motorman, train director, train master, and in 1958 moved over to become a bus supervisor.

In 1961, Walden went into Central Dispatch and became the "voice in the night" — handling the 9 p.m. to 5 a.m. shift.

Of his 43 years of service, he's spent about 30 years on night shifts and always liked it.

"There was no boss around and I could be the big cheese. I liked it, but I guess my wife didn't."

And now he figures he'll have time to bloom a while in the sun.
'Busiest Department' Keeps on the Go

THE BUILDING maintenance department has the tools to prove it's not only one of the "busiest departments on the property," but can take an award for variety.

Whatever the job, in the way of putting up, tearing down, repair, upkeep or what-have-you, it's likely to mean a call to building maintenance, according to Carl Knutson, foreman.

Operating out of a small shop at the Emeryville Division, Knutson and an eight-man crew handle a diversity of activities.

The men are proficient at the trades—painting, carpentry, plumbing, electrical work, machine repairs, maintenance of all kinds—and sometimes, plain, ordinary digging.

Assignments have a wide range—including passenger shelters, coach stop poles and signs; new oil lines at division yards; the upkeep of District-owned bus shelter benches; painting of office furniture; building cabinets, and putting up shelves.

Probably their biggest job came with the activation of AC Transit in 1960. They remodeled the offices used by the District at 1106 Broadway. Again, when the District moved to its present headquarters at 508 16th St., building maintenance handled some of the remodeling.

The unloading of new buses—370 to date—might be considered one of their trickiest assignments—and a tribute to an ability to wiggle.

With only a three-inch clearance on each side of the larger buses when they arrive by freight car, the men have to "think thin" to spring the buses from their containers without "using a can opener," according to Knutson.

The crew unpacked as many as 20 buses a day during the busy shipments which gave the District its initial fleet of new "Transit Liners."

A veteran construction worker, Knutson went to work for Key System in 1949 as a carpenter. He's been foreman of the department since 1957 and has a hobby of miniature old-time cars.

Working with him are Francis "Mickey" Hodge, Manuel "Frenchy" Barrious, Dudley Williams, Louis Britos, Frank Lauricella, Walter Malek, Louis Cooper and Francis "Joe" Bruni.

Among "odd" jobs handled by Knutson was the building of a flower arch to fit the doorway of a bus used on a Spring Garden Show charter—a flowery background well publicized and photographed. It marked the first time that a staple gun was used to "pin" carnations on a framework—or that a six-foot tall horseshoe-shaped wreath emerged from building maintenance.

A more recent specialty was the making of large District emblems for the side of the new Freeway Train. After making the emblem from plastic, Knutson engraved and painted it—and gave the Freeway Train its noticeable "badge of distinction."

ALL TRADES — Variety is the way of life for the building maintenance crew. Walter Malek, front, left, and Frank Bruni saw wood for cabinets being nailed together by Louis Britos. Manuel Barrious concentrates on repairing a fluorescent light.

ON THE BENCH — Latham Square benches take on a new, turquoise-colored hue, with the help of Francis Hodge, left, and Carl Knutson, building maintenance foreman. Frank Lauricella, below, makes overcap signs.

WALKINGEST MAN — Track walker for almost 30 years, Louis Cooper drives a truck now to water trees at a familiar passenger stop, Yerba Buena shelter.
At an adjourned regular meeting June 22, the Board of Directors:
  • Authorized participation in special merchant promotion program during construction of Bay Area Rapid Transit District facilities, on motion of Director Bettencourt.
  • Approved service adjustments on Lines 51, 57, 69A, 70 and 91, on motion of Director Berk. (See story, Pg. 3).
  • Adopted operating estimate for fiscal year 1966-67, on motion of Director Rinehart. (See story, Pg. 1).
  • Approved rider promotion advertising budget for 1966-67 fiscal year, on motion of Director Copeland.

At the regular meeting July 13, the Board of Directors:

Office Workers Receive Wage Increase

AC Transit clerical workers received a 15-cent hourly wage increase this month under terms of a new labor contract.

A total of 79 office workers are affected by the wage boost, which took effect July 1. Average salary increase came to 4.87 per cent.

The new agreement contains an additional $3 a month in health and welfare benefits, giving office workers the same $18 a month in benefits already received by other union employees of the District.

Office and clerical workers voted last January to select AFL-CIO Carmen's Union Division 102 as their bargaining agent. They previously were not represented by a union while employed by the District.

The labor contract expires next May 31 along with an agreement with 1245 bus drivers and mechanics who also are represented by the Carmen's Union. Cost to the District in additional wages and fringe benefits during the life of the contract is estimated at $49,900.