Actions of the Board

At an adjourned regular meeting Sept. 25, the Board of Directors:
- Awarded contract for furnishing one million bus tokens to Meyer and Wenthe, Inc., on low bid of $16,570, on motion of Director Coburn.
- Authorized General Manager to expend up to $8,000 in determining feasibility of operating electric bus through the BART underwater tube at time of dedication, on motion of Director Copeland.
- At regular meeting Oct. 9, the Board of Directors:
  - Authorized staff members to participate in National Safety Council and Transit Data Summaries Group, on motion of Director Bettencourt.

District to direct transit tests

The East Bay will be used for testing the most imaginative concepts of local, feeder-type transportation under a “transit laboratory” proposed by AC Transit. The district would direct studies into all types of transit, including ideas far beyond those considered feasible now.

In outlining plans for the “transit laboratory,” Alan L. Bingham, general manager, told the Board of Directors that although the most modern and sophisticated type of rapid rail transit is being built today, this is only part of the urban program required for a full system.

“We need to consider an effective collection and distribution system that’s just as modern and bold, to round out the complete program,” Bingham said.

Ideas such as “Dial a Bus” and transit expressways also would be studied and tested by the District to meet future regional needs, the general manager said.

High priority would be given to consideration of a high speed express system linking the Oakland Airport, the Bay Area Rapid Transit District’s coliseum station and the coliseum itself.

Other possibilities deserving study would include:

- Personalized transit service between the BART station in Berkeley and the University of California.

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New revenue record

New revenue records were chalked up on Friday, Oct. 4, as $53,911 dropped into fare boxes on East Bay and transbay lines, surpassing the Nov. 3 high of $53,919. Intercity express buses collected $3,452 the same day, topping the previous high of $3,409 tallied Feb. 23.

New bus moves transit into jet age

A sophisticated new bus, imaginative, comfortable and different, may receive its initial testing on AC Transit’s network when it makes a debut before the public.

The District has asked to have the experimental vehicle for operation on its lines, giving passengers a chance to ride a bus which promises to move the industry into the jet age of urban transportation.

The bus, called the RTX (Rapid Transit Experimental), is being developed by the GMC Truck and Coach Division of General Motors. A production date cannot be determined until work is completed, but GMC officials hope to complete work on the model for demonstration use next year, according to Alan L. Bingham, general manager.

Bingham, one of the first officials to view the bus and be briefed on the development, said the District had strongly siginfied its interest in acquiring the model for local experimentation.

He said there were a number of questions still to be resolved, but it appeared the model would be an exciting compatriot for the rail cars of the Bay Area rapid transit system.

Under development for several years, the bus is powered by a gas turbine engine, which would provide greater acceleration, with lower maintenance costs, than the diesel-powered engines now in use. The gas turbine also would provide a quieter power plant and would assist smog control.

The bus has a number of innovations, including a suspension system that allows it to kneel” at stops with curbs, reducing the step height as much as three inches.

The frame is welded, rather than riveted, and constructed in five-foot sections, so that the bus could be manufactured in varying lengths.

Padded seats

The current model, 40 feet long, features lounge type seating, with padded seats for 28 persons spotted in casual manner.

A good portion of the coach is made of quadruple density glass, which will give riders a wide-angle, “tinted” view far beyond the confines of the vehicle.

The handicapped would find ramps and a hoist platform for wheelchairs, while the blind would have the advantage of a metal strip on floor carpeting, plus a Braille bus stop reader.

Other passenger conveniences include an audio-visual communications system which would announce bus stops, destinations and other traveling information. Heating and air conditioning units are separated into zones, to permit more individualized temperature control.
Drivers take off on Own pursu...
The first three bus drivers enjoyed days off with pay and other drivers could anticipate a chance at the same prize this month as the District’s safety contest zoomed off with enthusiasm.

The “Skill is my business” contest brought out full participation, according to the look of entry blanks which jammed boxes at each division.

G. G. Wadsworth, safety engineer, said 1,000 entry blanks went into the boxes before the first contest closed. At the drawing, one operator shook up the barrel-full of blanks, while another driver reached in a hand to pick out a slip. If the answer to the printed safety quiz was correct—as expected—the driver won the day off with pay.

First winners included: W. R. Quinones from Seminary Division, B. J. Brewer, Richmond Division; and R. E. Matthews, Emeryville Division.

All had the right answers as what to do in a specific traffic situation.

A new contest starts every two weeks, following the drawing.

Drivers were pinned with “Safety Pro” badges at the beginning of the first contest and with “Super Safety Pro” badges at the start of the second contest. Colorful banners and posters have been other “attention getters in launching the effort to encourage bus drivers to “think safety” and drive safely.

SAFEST DRIVERS—Richmond drivers, right, collect coffee and doughnuts for surpassing safety goal—fifth time this year. Sharing treat were Emeryville drivers below, who also topped safe driving “bogey.”

The upward swing of business continued in August, with passenger revenue and the count of riders showing a slight gain.

Passenger revenue totaled $1,169,125, an increase of $21,103 or 1.84 percent over year-ago revenue of $1,148,022. The number of riders carried on District buses tallied 4,056,824, up .22 percent over the tally of 4,048,028 riders in August, 1967. The riding count on East Bay lines showed a decrease of .46 percent for the month, while transbay lines tallied an increase of 1.86 percent.

Revenue on East Bay Lines was $648,287, up 1.47 percent over last year. Transbay lines, consistent with a steady growth pattern, recorded revenue of $520,838, an increase of 2.31 percent. Commute book sales continued to gain, with a total of $215,700, up 11.5 percent over sales of $193,458 made in August a year ago.

Operation costs during the month totaled $1,446,120, up $61,405 or 4.43 percent over expenses of $1,384,715 for August, 1967. The District operated 1,985,172 miles of service, an increase of 23,331 miles or 1.19 percent over year-ago mileage.

Total income of $1,610,055 covered operational costs and depreciation, but left a deficit of $25,634 in meeting full bond debt requirements.

The transit industry nationally indicated a riding decrease for the month of 2.38 percent.
What the Editors are saying about transit

Alameda-Contra Costa Transit District's recently-announced plan to seek special federal aid in its effort to test new bus equipment and methods in the East-bay should be encouraged.

Because the district is now running a successful bus system it might be relatively easy to sit back and leave the major transit problems of the future for Bay Area Rapid Transit District to untangle.

BART, if its own financial problems are ever resolved, is no more likely to provide final answers to the problems of urban traffic congestion than did the advent of freeways.

There will have to be a complex feeder system to and from BART stations.

Testing lab for transit proposed

(Continued from Page 2)

Special service between the BART station in Hayward, downtown Hayward and the State college.

Individual cars holding two to four riders, traveling on exclusive guideways.

Bingham said preliminary talks had been held with Alan S. Boyd, secretary, U.S. Department of Transportation, concerning the possibility of federal financing. Meetings also will be held with East Bay groups interested in different phases of future transit.

The general manager proposed setting aside certain board meetings in months ahead so representatives of firms developing different transportation innovations could appear and make a presentation on their ideas.