

**California Association of School Transportation Officials
State Board Meeting**



MINUTES
Wednesday, November 10, 2021
10:00am – 11:30am
Virtual Zoom Meeting – Live on YouTube

I. OPENING – President Matthew Thomas, 10:00am

A. Pledge of Allegiance

B. Attendance

1. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20

*President, 1st VP, 2nd VP, Secretary, Treasurer, Past President,
Professional Associate Rep., Contractor Rep., Sustaining Member Rep.,
CASTOway's Editor, CASBO Rep., CDE Rep., DMV Rep., Legislative Rep.*

2. *Verification of Eligibility* – Mike Sawyer

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20

C. Introductions and Welcome -State Board, Executive Board, Audience

D. Minutes of Prior Meetings – 9/10/2021 - (M) Chad Barksdale (S) Tony Peregrina (C)

E. Correspondence – Dano received a letter from the Delta Hotel and forwarded it to Matthew Thomas. Christina read the letter dated 10/26/2021 signed by the General Manager. Matt then read an email dated Wednesday October 27, 2021 12:39pm from Connie Estavel to Dano Rybar, “Hi Dano, attached is the letter from our General Manager along with the invoice for the cancellation fees for the October 20, 2021 event. Dano please know that we spoke to our ownership group about how enjoyable it is to work with you and what a great event CASTO always has at the hotel. I just want you to know for your 2022 event we will be extending special discounted pricing to you along with amenities, etc. We want to keep you happy even though we had to charge cancellation fees for last months scheduled conference. It is my hope that all future events between our two companies will continue to be as successful and as pleasant has they have been in the past. If there is anything, we can do to assist you please do not hesitate to let me know. Thank you for a wonderful working relationship and friendship. We look forward to welcoming the CASTO family back to the hotel next year. take care, Connie E”. Dano wanted this in the minutes so that in the future if he or Connie are not around, we could show the minutes to the hotel, as proof to what the hotel has offered to CASTO.

F. Additions / Changes the Agenda – Matt is adding under #3 New Business adding “Changes to Sustaining Member Benefits”. (M) Michael Sawyer (S) TrisAnn Ratko-Robinson (C)

II. Reports

A. Treasurer – Christina Celeste, checking \$186,349.14 savings \$30,792.53 total \$217,141.67. Christina sent out the Budget vs Actual report, no question. (M) Jennie Fisher

(S) Chad Barksdale (C) The question was asked if the balance to the accounts included the amount owed to the Delta Hotel and Christina answered that the balance does not reflect the amount, but the report does.

B. Membership – Mike Sawyer,

Chapter 1, total 334
Chapter 2, total 312
Chapter 3, total 248
Chapter 4, total 147
Chapter 5, total 11
Chapter 6, total 149
Chapter 7, total 113
Chapter 8, total 56
Chapter 9, total 15
Chapter 10, total 159
Chapter 12, total 153
Chapter 13, total 201
Chapter 14, total 126
Chapter 15, total 29
Chapter 17, total 22
Chapter 18, total 42
Chapter 19, total 21
Chapter 20, total 53

Including 180 Sustaining members for a total of 2371 Members, 47 Agency Members. We still have about 600 members that have not renewed so most of the numbers are from agencies, so this is good. So, we might need to put a carrot out there to get our individual members whose agency does not paid for agency dues. What is that carrot out there to get them to renew their dues? How do we get those 600 members to renew? What do they get for their membership this year? Please remember your membership dues get you a lot of things behind the scenes like legislate analyst, Nico lobbying for funding for school transportation or anything that can impact our industry. Any question about membership email Mike michael.sawyer@smusd.org or michael.sawyer@castoways.org .

C. State Officers – Executive Board

D. Special Representatives –

1. *California Department of Education* – Anna Borges, Instructor Courses scheduled for January 2022 and it is full. The March Class 2022 is half full. If you are looking to send someone would recommend, get them trained and ready to go sooner than later. CHP training coming up in December. New calendar posted on the website that addresses the Transportation Administration Program, as well as the Transporting Students with Disabilities, Special Needs Conference. If you need any further information, contact the office. November 30, 2021 is the end of the extension for FMCSA which then the Governor writes an executive order which then excepts into the State of California. Do we believe another extension will be given... It does not appear that it will. The medical has ended in September you need to confirm and make sure all your people's credentials are current. As of November 30, 2021, the Department of Education, for Instructors, will no longer be providing an extension. If you are delinquent in training or if you have not renewed any of your credentials, you will probably receive notification from the Department saying you have until this time if unfortunately, if you don't comply with statutory requirements, we will have to cancel your Instructor Certificate. Which will be a further hardship on the industry because we are so short drivers it's imperative to maintain a good number of valid instructors in the state of California. This is the first time we have been below a 1000 Instructor since she has worked at the Department.

When COVID came on we had a huge wave of retirees, people moving to different positions or don't have time to instruct but if we don't get people certified we will begin to see a bigger gap in driver shortage. ELDT (Enter Level Driver Training) requirements take effective February 7, 2022, she has asked if they are not going to postpone again which is what they have done for the last six years, with the Clearinghouse, Drug and Alcohol, National Registry for Doctors, for medicals, now ELDT training which is the last piece of the puzzle, they say they are going forward. We need to insure that after February 7, 2022 training providers are registered on the database because remember they will now to checking your applicants who are going to take a test for SPAB or School Bus to make sure you are on the training provider list and you are approved to give the curriculum. Instructors do not register independently unless you are an Independent Instructor, if you work for an LEA or Contractor then it is by Carrier your register. TrisAnn asked if there would be a form that you would fill out to take to DMV or CHP? As of right now there is no form that we fill out, that is the California Highway Patrol will be filling out the form that is required for ELDT. I will not change the application or testing process its more paperwork on the State Agency side. Circling back to our courses, we do everything in person except graduation which we do by Zoom so attendees can have all your support attend. At this time, we do not require attendees to be vaccinated although you do have to provide if you are fully vaccinated or not. We do temperature checks everyday we also tell anybody attending here to limit their interaction with anyone outside this building, don't go home on the weekends, don't be going out and partying after class or whatever. I'm bring this up because I'm not sure where we are heading, it could be come January's class the state my say that everyone may have to be vaccinated to attend. I don't know so we will keep everybody update. If they make it a mandated through the Department of Education, we don't have any options. Driver Shortage we know this is a problem not just in California but across the United States. Anna has been in discussion with representatives close to the Governors office that are trying to find a solution. As we are watching people using vans as part of the solution, we just had a horrible accident in a van with school children even though they are not mandated because it no a school bus accident, if we start see these private companies or LEA trying to get vans and put kids in vans, we already know NHSTA (National Highway Traffic Safety Administration) has everything required if hiring for van only it has to comply with school transportation vehicle within statue with the drug and alcohol program, there is no mandated training so hopefully you are providing training. If things continue as they are we believe we will see some folks out there trying to make change to 545VC because it's the passenger count that gets people to slide away from putting them in school buses. We know the struggle exist with not mandated home to school transportation and the answer is from an LEA or from anybody, we need more money. I don't think they are going to give more money. I know the big complaint at districts are they don't like LCFF they want to go back to categorical. All of this is just weaving together and the driver shortages again they are looking for long term solutions. The reason I bring up other than school bus because we are seeing a rise in accidents and school children are on that vehicle. Understanding the struggle, we do have to get children to school. Very excited that they did ask to speak with us, asked us what we thought to get possible solutions. All the way around from getting people to walk through the door, some incentives, retention of current drivers, getting new drivers, assuring instructors staff, testing, appointments all of it combined. Know that our department is advocating for all of you, we everybody to get more money, mandate home to school transportation, which will assist you in the incentives.

2. *Sustaining Member Representative* – Brandon Bluhm, to share one thing that all the manufactures have is moving from the van to offering the multipurpose activity bus, small transit styles, they are built to school bus safety. Infrastructure bill was just recently passed \$5 million is earmarked for school bus not sure what that will mean over the course of the next 10 years. There will be workshops coming we do know that means electric is not going away across all states. Hopefully the resources will be there to enable more school district to move in that direction toward electric. Regarding Grants, Bay Area Air Quality Management District their applicant process is open with AB 617 and Carl Moyer funding. San Diego APCD just announced a grant just opened on Monday through the end of this calendar year. HVIP just closed but there will be dedicated funding for school buses in this next round next year. Also challenges that are coming from the manufacturing side, supply chain challenges that a very real from parts no longer available to being on back order to manufactures sourcing alternatives trying to navigate through these times. Price increase is also something to expect. Really need to plan ahead. Mike asked about Transit styles rear diesel engines not being CARB compliant, will they be available in the future? CARB has very aggressive things they are putting into place when it comes to emissions and 2024 these change to a requirement that right now diesel is not able to meet. In conversation with the Air Resource Board there might be some bridge between when this is to shut off and when Cummins is able to meet those requirements. Its only get tougher as the requirement move to a .02 then a .01. it could potentially get to a point where it is difficult to purchase diesel or not available depending on how clean they make it. As well as how much more they need to add to the equipment to make it clean.
3. *Contractors Representative* – Erin Borda, No Report
4. *CASBO Representative* – Carlos Chicas, No Report

III. Standing Committee Report

1. *Legislation* – Nico Chavez, touch base on the CARB funding for the multiyear investment that CARB is making over the next 3 years, \$130 million this year, \$135 million 2022-2023 and then \$135 million the following year for zero emission school buses, the plan is to put another 1,000 on the road. This is a huge win for more replacement money. The next piece is the more pressing for this time is the funding aspect so in past year we have ran the same bill almost with COLA and cost of living increase and equalization formula to it, this has not worked as we are in the same spot we were when the LCFF was created and even before that when the funding was froze. Right now, we are working with CSEA looking at different avenues approaching the subject main piece being focused on the school bus driver shortage. Its an issue nation wide and the Governor is looking at it. With the additional funding the state is receiving it is creating a perfect storm to go after additional funding for not only to hire school bus driver and for your operations in general but to really focus on what is driving, what is creating this situation, what are they aspects? What is causing the school bus driver shortage? We are going after dedicated funding for school transportation. TrisAnn asked what are the topics they have been discussing concerning the driver shortage? Nico believes Anna covered them very well, the decline in investment at the state level in Education and at the district level, and COVID put that really on its head. The other piece is how long it takes to get a school bus driver from the door to behind the wheel. And with that being said let's make it very clear that safety is the number one priority with all of this. The other issue during the pandemic is the other opportunities out there, unemployment or driving for other places it becomes a money issue. There needs to be more funding to help maintain and keep the drivers you do hire and train. The other aspect is the training, there is less funding at CDE.
2. *Roadeo Report* – Doug Smith, No Report

3. *Access & Mobility* – Tony Peregrina, no updated except we do have books available for purchase.
4. *Fundraiser / BINGO* – Dano Rybar, BINGO operates two sessions a week Wednesday evenings and Sunday 11:00am matinee. The are in Citrus Heights and attendance is fantastic. They pay out over \$20,000 a session and still make money for CASTO.

IV. Business and Issues

A. Old Business

1. *Poster Contest “Be Cool – follow the rules”* - Amanda Hightman, Poster are due via email amandahightman@yahoo.com by January 7, 2022.
2. *CASTO In person events / virtual* – Matt Thomas, reminder for all Chapters, you are expected to follow the state and only do virtual events through June 30, 2022.

B. New Business

1. *CASTO BINGO / Insurance / Savings / Delta – Marriott* – Matt Thomas, Matt thanked Dano for his dedication to CASTO and his 11 years of dedication to CASTO BINGO. CASTO BINGO has raised so much money, that they have presented a check to put \$25,000.00 into the saving account. CASTO BINGO has also donated \$27,971.67 to the organization to settle the account with the Delta by Marriott Hotel for our cancellation of the Managers Business Forum. Lastly all 18 chapters, \$15,450.00 is being paid by CASTO BINGO to pay for the Insurance for this year. If you have already paid you Insurance bill your chapter will be receiving a refund check. Dano thank everyone for acknowledging his hard work, he really loves BINGO and enjoys doing it, but he wanted to thank all of his co-workers at OST for all their help and support. Dano wanted on the record how the amount of \$27,000.00 was arrived at. We were told that the Delta Marriott lost about \$106,000.00 when we cancelled the original conference in last year due to banquet and rooming charges. When we cancelled the March 2021 conference, he renegotiated contracted with them on April 6, 2021, identifying let's do Managers Forum and they said as a group we cancelled that, and the state was opened at the time, and we were allowed to have it they lost another total around \$62,000.00 revenue from us in as in hotel rooms they could have sold. So, they felt since it was a 90% cancellation fee for the Managers Forum which would have been around \$55,000, that \$27,971.67 was appropriate. He did not want to argue it too much because we have cancelled two big events with them already. Anna and Dano talked and since BINGO was originally for Roadeo but since we have not had a Roadeo for a while, let's put the money toward the association. They also talked about next year they want to also pay a portion of the insurance like the chapters since they also use the insurance for BINGO.
2. *2022 State Conference* – Matt Thomas, Dano shared that at our last State Board meeting it was discussed that we were cancelling the October 2021 Manager Business Forum as well as the February 2022 State Conference, which was scheduled to be held in Sacramento at the Doubletree Hotel. During that time, I was in the middle of signing contracts with the Doubletree Hotel, which means they have a contract signed by CASTO by me to host the February 2022 Conference but what I do not have is the countersigned contract from the Doubletree which means the contract is not valid until both parties have signed off on it. So, when we went ahead and cancelled it we were in the middle of transferring paperwork back and forth and the Doubletree did not provide a sign signature on the contract saying we are responsible to attend a conference in February 2022. So, that means to me its void because there is not two party agreement,

yes they have a signature for me but I was waiting on a countersignature on the banquet food and they never got back to me. So, since we last met, I have two emails going to the Doubletree Hotel requesting a discussion with them in regards to, we are not there and the contract is not valid, I have heard zero from the Doubletree Hotel. Matt then shared that the Conference will not be the weekend originally planned, it will be a one-day virtual conference on Saturday in January we want to use the Hopin platform, 8:00am-4:00pm. TrisAnn then shared that Chapter 7 has a workshop planned for January 22, 2022, Matt said it would not be the 22nd. Christina then said that she has reached out to Hopin, and they responded that our contract end on January 28, 2022 and if we are to use up what we have we would need to do it before the 28th or renew the contract and she is still waiting on them to get back to her on the cost to renew the contract. Matt then said we will go back to the drawing board to set a date.

3. *Changes to “Agency Members Benefits” and “Sustaining Members Benefits” pages in Officers Handbook* – Matt Thomas, Tabling until the next meeting, January 15, 2022.
4. *Nominations for Executive Board* – Tony Peregrina, every year we open the nomination for the executive board so abiding by the bylaws for the positions of President, 1st Vice President, 2nd Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, Professional Associate Rep.

V. INFORMATION EXCHANGE

A. Chapter News – Chapter Presidents

4, 2, 3, 4,-5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 44, 15, 17, 18, 49, 20

VI. ADJOURNMENT 11:54am (M) Chad Barksdale (S) Tessie Reeder (C)