



Transit Advisory Board
Thursday, October 10, 2019
Alvarado Transit Center – 2nd Floor
100 1st Street SW
Albuquerque, NM 87102
4:30pm-5:00pm

Members Present

Israel Chavez, Chair (car); Brendan Miller, Vice-Chair (car); William Moore (walked); Patricia Salisbury (bus); Christopher Ramirez (phone); Kathy Foster (bus), Orville Pratt (bus), Rachel Hertzman (car)

Members Absent

Geoffrey Zehnder, Steve Pilon, Harris Balkin

Staff Members Present

Stephanie Dominguez, Deputy Director (car); Rita Chavez, Executive Assistant (car)

Visitors Present

Steve Syers, Chuck Ruben, Peter Rua, Omar Torres

Call to Order

Israel Chavez, Chair called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm.

Approval of Agenda

Israel Chavez, Chair asked for a motion to approve the October 10, 2019 agenda as presented. William Moore 2nd the motion and it was approved unanimously by the Transit Advisory Board (TAB) members.

Approval of Minutes

Israel Chavez, Chair asked for a motion to approve the minutes from September 12, 2019, Brendan Miller 2nd the motion and it was approved unanimously by the TAB members.

Public Comment – *Reminder there is a 2 minute limit on Public Comment(s).*

Steve Syers-I have a service animal with me and I have been left behind by bus drivers at the bus stop because of him. I've complained to the 311 Department and talked to the Mayor's office regarding this issue. My service animal doesn't wear a service vest because it cuts into his skin and only wears a collar around his neck. I would recommend a voluntary program with ABQ Ride where we can come in and show you our service animal so we can at least get a picture or something put on an ID that's been approved by your department.

Chuck Ruben-The recent changes to bus routes #36 and #37 have made a hardship for students and employees to connect with bus route #790. Those bus routes use to stop in front of the federal courthouse building and now people have to travel three blocks to get the #790 bus stop. This problem can easily be remediated by bringing back the #36 or #37 bus route to its old location. He also recommends adding a #790 bus stop at Twelfth Street and Lomas Boulevard for easier connections with the #36 or #37.

Omar Torres-I's with the Together for Brothers organization, are helping put together a transit town hall meeting aimed at young people, we want to focus on their voice and perspective of how they view or would use the local city bus route system. Also, this meeting will get feedback from them about what bus routes they don't have or would like to have to reach their desired destination.

TAB Chairperson Report – Israel Chavez

Mr. Chavez started his report by talking about bus routes #37 and #8. He met with Andrew De Garmo, ABQ Ride's Principal Planner and realized that more buses cannot be added but only reallocated because to get something you have to take something to make it happen. Also when a change is made the entire system has to accommodate that adjustment. The D-Ride bus route was discontinued due to low ridership and the #37 was changed to make up for that loss. These changes made people travel at least two city blocks or more to reach the federal courthouse area and understand how this can be a challenge for some folks. ABQ Ride did supply us with documents that detailed all the bus routes weekday ridership boarding's which shows why they made the changes the way they did.

During the chairperson report, Patricia Salisbury, TAB member stated we're not asking that the #37 change and we're not asking for the #8 to change but proposing that the #36 goes on Second Street rather than Sixth Street to service the federal courthouse area. This will allow people to make easier transfers to other bus routes. Brendan Miller, TAB member also has had difficulties getting from the mentioned bus routes to the federal courthouse area which is where route #790 resides. Christopher Ramirez, TAB member wanted to add to these comments saying commuter bus routes are very costly and that isn't mentioned in the weekday ridership boarding documents.

Director's Report- Stephanie Dominguez, Deputy Director

Ms. Dominguez started the director's report by saying in regards to service animals we will consider doing some outreach that was suggested and provide our driver's information on how to accommodate individuals with service animals. Next, she read the ridership numbers for September, it was 770,000 riders and is down compared to September 2018. Overall ridership is down 5% when compared to last year. She then spoke about the mentioned bus route changes and how eliminating or adding bus routes can impact an entire system. She then discussed the frequency of when the printed bus schedule is changed out which occurs every two to three years and replacing the printed system maps is very costly to the department. Lastly, she spoke about cleaning and repairs the department performs. The city is divided into four quadrants, we have seven people that are assigned to clean and repair the entire system.

During the director's report, there was a discussion regarding the Transit Departments' incoming and outgoing revenue. The operating budget is about 57 million dollars a year and generates 3 million dollars from the fare boxes of buses. There was also a brief conversation on collecting information about how many people pay to ride the bus and to get people who don't pay fares to start providing payment to use these services. Next, there was more dialogue about the mentioned route changes and most of the TAB members agree there have to be better bus connections to make up for the loss of the D-Ride route. Rachel Hertzman, TAB member commented she would like to have some kind of an interactive document or chart model detailing the changes before and after the aforementioned route changes. Lastly, TAB members talked about proposing route #8 remain the same for all days of the week and adding more running time to that route may be an acceptable option.

TAB Member Questions:

Brendan Miller-Why can't we increase funding and make getting more money a transit priority?

Dominguez's response: we appreciate that comment and we would love if TAB members could serve as a support network for us to show city counselors this should be a priority.

Kathy Foster-Could you expand on what you just said about TAB members going to city counselors and what does that mean? *Dominguez's response: we still operate on a fiscal year budget which starts on July 1st through June 30th of every year and late December through March would be the best time to approach city counselors to request any additional funding for the department.*

Christopher Ramirez-Does the Transit Department has plans to address the significant reduction in bus passengers that have been ongoing for a while now? *Dominguez's response: we have specific projects that are coming along through our marketing team, one specific promotion is the A.R.T bus line and low gas prices along with services like UBER do present interesting challenges to overcome.*

Approval of Patricia Salisbury's Motion

Israel Chavez, Chair asked for a motion to approve Patricia Salisbury's proposal that the #8 route stay the same all days of the week with a slight delay in bus frequency. Orville Pratt 2nd the motion and it was approved unanimously by the TAB members.

New Business

Wasn't mentioned

Unfinished Business

Wasn't mentioned

Announcements

There were no announcements.

Adjournment

Israel Chavez, Chair adjourned the meeting at 5:32 pm.

Next Meeting: Thursday, November 14, 2019; 4:00 PM at the ATC-2nd Floor