

**Transit Advisory Board**

**Alvarado Transportation Center – 2nd Floor**

**Meeting Minutes**

**September 13, 2018**

**Board Members**

In Attendance:

Brendan Miller (bus/walked), Harris Balkin (drove), Patricia Salisbury (bus), Israel Chavez (drove), David Kesner (walked), Willie Richardson (drove), Bob Tilley (bike), Orville Pratt (bus), Lucy Birbiglia (SunVan), Rachel Hertzman (Rideshare), Nancy JonesFrances (walked)

**Members of the Public**

In Attendance:

No one showed up.

**ABQ RIDE**

In Attendance:

Ernest Apodaca, Administrative Assistant (drove); Amanda Trujillo, Customer Service Supervisor (carpool); Bernard Toon, Transit Director (drove)

**Meeting Called to Order at 11:54 AM**

Brendan Miller called the meeting to order at 11:54 a.m. Mr. Miller then took roll and asked everyone what their mode of transportation was. The attendees responded (see above; In Attendance) and the meeting started.

**Acceptance of Agenda:** Mr. Miller motioned to approve the agenda.

**Approval of Minutes from July 12, 2018 and August 09, 2018:**

The minutes for July/August were approved after a review of the grammar and punctuation were carefully analyzed.

**Public Comment:**

No public comments since no one showed up.

**TAB Members Comments:**

Upon approval of the minutes, Brendan Miller asked the TAB (Transit Advisory Board) members for a nomination of the Vice-Chair TAB position. Nancy JonesFrances, Israel Chavez, and Lucy Birbiglia nominated Harris Balkin for the job. The nomination was seconded by the above members and approved. Congratulations, Harris Balkin.

**Announcements:** There were no announcements.

**Presentations from:** There were no presentations.

**Side Notes:**

Brendan Miller discussed the new APD (Albuquerque Police Department) safety district center and how having more police presence is a good thing for the downtown area.

David Kesner asked ABQ Ride Director Bernard Toon how long will APD be stationed at the ATC (Alvarado Transportation Center). Mr. Toon responded by saying its temporary and they may move out eventually, however the nearby buildings need a lot of work in order for that to happen. They could possibly be here for at least one year.

Bob Tilley stated he’s a downtown resident. He remembers when APD had their transport unit moved into the downtown area and all the problems it caused. He stated he would love to see the ATC become a transportation only place, and a gathering area much like the original hotel was many years ago.

Mr. Tilley would like to see APD perform community policing rather than stationary policing. Bernard Toon added the new APD station will provide a variety of services thanks to the Albuquerque Fire Department and other government organizations helping to make it more than just another APD establishment. He also talked about how the ATC security guards will expand their coverage range.

The TAB members then discussed the homeless in the downtown area. Israel Chavez stated we (as a city) should address the problem instead of moving it or hiding it and this seems to be what the Mayor of Albuquerque is doing. Mr. Tilley mentioned he would like to see security go beyond the railroad tracks eastbound which could help the nearby businesses grow.

Harris Balkin then discussed at a recent luncheon he attended, the Mayor made a speech about improving Albuquerque but no mention of the ART (Albuquerque Rapid Transit) project or the city’s Transit Department. Mr. Balkin hopes the Transit Department is in good standing with the Mayor of Albuquerque and would like to see him attend a TAB meeting. Mr. Toon replied by stating the Mayor is aware/engaged with ART and working hard with the Transit Department.

**Director’s Report:**

Bernard Toon started the Directors report by talking about bus ridership increasing 4.1% from April to August 2018. He also discussed the ART route map and how it will integrate into existing bus routes. Mr. Toon then mentioned that nearly 40% of bus riders are on or near the Central bus route. Nancy JonesFrances inquired about adding ART routes to service the University and Journal Center areas. Mr. Toon answered by stating we (meaning the Transit Department) are going to work with UNM in regards to ART and the Rapid Ride buses currently in use will eventually become retired from service.

Bob Tilley then went on to mention Transit seems to be forgetting other projects in regards to expansion ever since the ART project started and how there was plenty of public meetings giving feedback about ART. Mr. Toon replied by saying we’re currently updating the CUTC (Central Unser Transfer Center) and once that project is complete; it will open new expansion possibilities. Brendan Miller added he would like to see Bus Route #155 go into the CUTC and for the Transit Department to better provide service for the SW/SE quadrant.

David Kesner then talked about how he would like to see no Park and Rides in the CUTC area and more urban residential buildings. Mr. Toon answered by stating that’s exactly what the plan is, the City of Albuquerque is definitely working on this idea and the FTA (Federal Transit Authority) is very interested in the final outcome. He also added, The Mayor plans on making the UTC (Uptown Transit Center) area copy what will happen in the CUTC area. Mr. Toon did mention some Park and Rides are necessary. Lucy Birbiglia commented that millennials and seniors may not get along in these new residential buildings. Israel Chavez reminded the TAB members that the city has a law that requires buildings to have a minimum parking space available and city council needs to change the laws for this change to happen. Nancy JonesFrances then reminded the TAB members that self-driving cars will become a reality and there may be no need for park and ride lots. Mr. Miller said he would like to see more Park and Rides.

Israel Chavez mentioned he feels the City of Albuquerque needs to better serve people of color and make the buses or communities safer for the indigent class of people in the city.

**Unfinished Business:**

Brendan Miller started Unfinished Business by asking for updates on Bus Routes #16, 51, 53, and 54 which he discussed back in April, 2018. He suggested the routes run every 20 minutes on weekdays, 30 minutes on weekends, and if they can run on Sundays. Bernard Toon responded by stating he has no information to report about these bus routes and ART is taking up a lot of time to get up and running. He added we (Transit) are working on it and we can have that information for the next meeting in October.

Mr. Toon then stated there’s no official start date for ART, driver training is continuing, and we’re 40% done which is right on schedule. He also mentioned we have 15 ART buses, were test running 5 of them a day on Central Avenue, and the buses themselves are very delicate. Mr. Toon added we have fixed over 150 issues with ART; we’re working with a company to ensure the buses will be ready for public use and the charging stations for ART are coming along well.

Harris Balkin made comments regarding ART training and how these buses don’t slow down as fast as the other buses do. This causes the drivers of ART buses to slam on their brakes to stop their motion. Mr. Toon replied by saying that’s correct and our ART drivers are very good at docking the buses at the ART stations.

Mr. Balkin stated he would love to see an ART driver attend the next TAB meeting to give feedback.

Lucy Birbiglia asked a question about access; mainly about making the ART kiosks more accessible to visual impaired citizens. Mr. Toon said the kiosks are ADA compliant and were having more wayfinding tools installed at ART stations that will help citizens get to where there are going. Brendan Miller then stated he would like to see the County (Bernalillo) work more closely with the City of Albuquerque to improve bus service in the SW/SE quadrant once ART is complete. Mr. Miller suggested having bus routes from the east quadrant connect to those areas and Route #16 should be just Broadway and University.

Bob Tilley suggested Albuquerque’s bus system become more like the City of Houston’s transit system.

Mr. Toon made a comment regarding having a better relationship with the FTA (Federal Transit Authority) ever since the ART project began.

David Kesner reminded Mr. Toon that the Airport bus areas still lack signs and need more of them there to cut down on citizen confusion.

Harris Balkin then mentioned that bus transfer calls need to improve because some drivers wait and others do not. Bob Tilley suggested we increase the frequency of bus routes to solve this issue. Nancy JonesFrances added bus drivers need to stop for everyone and be more aware of their environment. Bernard Toon responded by saying we will work on this issue and take a look at how Transit’s dispatchers operate.

Israel Chavez mentioned he would like to see late night buses on Central Avenue return along with town meetings to supplement the once a month TAB meetings. He would call it a “listening tour.”

Willie Richardson the stated this is his last day on the job and wanted to thank Transit and the TAB Board for all their service. He added he will miss them and wishes them the best.

**Meeting adjourned at 1:19 pm.**

**Next meeting: September 13, 2018.**

**Meeting minutes writing with love and care by:**

**Ernest Apodaca**

**ABQ Ride, Administrate Assistant**