

**Transit Advisory Board**

**Alvarado Transportation Center – 2nd Floor**

**Meeting Minutes**

**April 12, 2018**

**Board Members**

In Attendance:

Lucy Birbiglia, Nancy JonesFrancis, Brendan Miller, Willie Richardson, Rachel Hertzman, Patricia Salisbury, Bob Tilley, Orville Pratt

**Members of the Public**

In Attendance:

Dan Majewski, Christopher Ramirez, Colby Livingston, John Fleck, Michael Lawler, Sarah Kelly

**ABQ RIDE**

In Attendance:

Bernie Toon, ABQ RIDE Director; Yvette Garcia, Administrative Assistant

**Meeting Called to Order:**

Mr. Miller called the meeting to order at 11:46 AM. He then took roll and asked everyone that was in attendance what their mode of transportation to the meeting was: Brendan Miller-Walked, Lucy Birbiglia- Sun Van, Nancy JonesFrancis-Walked, Patricia Salisbury-Bus, Willie Richardson-Drove, Orville Pratt-Car, Bob Tilley-Biked, Rachel Hertzman-Did not state, Christopher Ramirez-Walked, Colby Livingston-Sun Van, Dan Majewski-Biked, John Fleck-Biked, Michael Lawler-Did not state, Sarah Kelly-Did not state, Bernie Toon-Walked, Yvette Garcia-Car.

**Acceptance of Agenda:** All members of the board approved agenda.

**Approval of Minutes from March:**

All Members of the Board approved March 8, 2018 Minutes.

**Public Comment**

None

**Presentation from Dan Majewski and Christopher Ramirez: Update regarding Central Ave. corridor grant.**

Dan Majewski spoke about how he has been working closely with Transit looking at opportunities for increase in the vitality and the development of the Central Avenue corridor. Most of his research has been completed and now they are trying to move more into the implementation strategy. He will be working closely with Bernie Toon, Keith Breitbach and some of the other individuals from marketing to take customer-centric focus by looking at ridership. They will be bringing in actual customers who use the bus to give feedback on improvements and concerns that they can share as everyday riders.

Christopher Ramirez spoke about the Health Pack Assessment program and how he will be working with Bernie Toon to try and get the Youth Pass up and running. He is trying to include Cultural Services, libraries, Rio Metro, APS school services, and all city entities that would impact the health acuity of a young person in the city of Albuquerque. He would also like to get feedback, concerns and comments to help with decision making. Mr. Ramirez stated that he has a lot of young adults working closely with him and his team to promote youth ridership and to have more opportunities in the city.

**Chairpersons’ report**

None

**Director’s report**

Mr. Bernie Toon has stated he is our new director for the Transit Department and would like to give a short background on where he comes from. He came from a small town in Indiana that does not have a public transportation system. Mr. Toon stated he had worked in the Washington, D.C. area for about thirty five years. He spent time working in the Pentagon and has worked closely for many different senators and congressmen. He has also worked along with several representative’s agencies. He worked for Senator Bill Bradley from New Jersey as chief of staff and received a lot of exposure to transportation issues. He served for Senator Jeff Bingaman here in New Mexico and that’s when he fell in love with our state. Last summer, Mr. Toon was considering leaving Washington and he met with Tim Keller, who was then State Auditor. Mr. Keller and Mr. Toon sparked up a conversation and Mr. Toon mentioned to Mr. Keller that he was anxious to get back to New Mexico. They shared a conversation on possibly getting back into the administrative side and now, here he is as our new Transit Director. Mr. Toon stated he feels Albuquerque is a really fascinating place where the community has several things going. Since Mr. Toon has become director, the main focus has been the ART project. He has also been meeting with the transit staff as well as the public. Mr. Toon has done some serious outreach to the heads of other city departments to get in tuned with Albuquerque. Mr. Toon stated that for the past two weeks, they have tested all the technology from all of the stations along the infrastructure and there will be a 311 and 911 dial capability from all stations. Along with this, all the security cameras will be feeding into the Real Time Crime Center at the Albuquerque Police Department. The physical changes that needed to be made on some of the ART stations have been substantially completed. He said ABQ RIDE is still working on the bus issues; is in talks with the bus company and still have cosmetic and mechanical, as well as range issues with the ART buses and says Transit is working really hard to get these issues fixed. He said the city still doesn’t have a date on when service will start. Mr. Toon stated we are working on a way to get these issues fixed and to start service. Mr. Toon finally spoke about the ridership and it looks like we had a drop over a couple of years. We are down 2.4 percent in January, 2.8 percent in February, 3.46 percent in March, and about 8 percent from Fiscal Year 2017 to Fiscal Year 2018. Mr. Toon added he would like to mention how wonderful our Paratransit service is in Albuquerque.

Ms. Salisbury would like to know how the funding is going for ART. Mr. Toon responded by saying that the decision is up to the Federal Transit Administration. He says the city visits with them on a quarterly basis and also on a bi-weekly basis. The FTA is happy we are almost complete with the infrastructure piece of the project and now they would like to get the buses up and running. He indicated that as soon as we can get a bit closer to completion, then they will consider releasing the funds. Mr. Toon mentioned that there is no guarantee that we will receive that money, since we are competing with other projects around the country. The ART project is rated very well and with how far we have come as far as completion, we have a good chance of approval.

Ms. JonesFrancis asked Mr. Toon what is his optimism for the ART buses as far as when the busses will be at 100% completed. Mr. Toon’s response was that he thinks it is too soon to tell. Mr. Richardson was curious since we are getting new buses if they will be equipped with the Quantum system for wheel chair devices. Mr. Toon stated “Yes, they will.”

Ms. Birbiglia has an understating that the buses have a wheelchair spot, one of which is automatically secured and the other which the driver has to secure. There is an issue that one person using a wheelchair has to ride backwards on the ART busses. Mr. Lawler concerns about the handicap reserved seating on our city buses. He mentioned in last month’s meeting minutes stated that there is no law requiring that we seat handicap. He stated he sees a sign posted on both sides of the bus saying that these seats are reserved by federal law. Why are those signs up if we are not going to fallow them? Mr. Toon stated that we will have to address that in our public information campaign.

**Unfinished business**

Ms. Birbiglia mentioned that she knows there is some effort to make the ART project assessable to the handicapped individuals, but she still has concerns about accessibility at some of the kiosks for the visually impaired. She has not be able to get an answer whether or not it’s going to work for them. She asked Mr. Toon if they had any visually-impaired riders that has been used to test out accessibility for the ART stations. Mr. Toon stated he need to dig further into matter and will get back to the board.

Mr. Miller wanted to see if we are able to add more stops to some of our routes due to having to walk so far. Ms. Salisbury wanted to bring up another option to add bus stops around Winrock Mall, since there is a new shopping center out that way and for people to catch
Rout #766, they would have to walk far as well. Ms. Salisbury suggested maybe like something similar to the D-Ride to stop at the Coronado Center, Uptown Center, Winrock Mall and to the Uptown Transit Center. Mr. Toon said he thinks that would be a great idea and he will be meeting with his staff and see what they have to say about it and get back to the board.

**Meeting adjourned at 1:17pm**