

Unofficial Transit Advisory Board

Thursday, April 09, 2020

Alvarado Transit Center – 2nd Floor

100 1st Street SW

Albuquerque, NM 87102

4:00pm to 5:30pm

**Members Present**

Israel Chavez, Chair (ZOOM); Brendan Miller, Vice-Chair (ZOOM); Rachel Hertzman (ZOOM); Harris Balkin (phone); Christopher Ramirez (ZOOM); Steve Pilon (ZOOM); Kathy Foster (ZOOM); William Moore (phone); Patricia Salisbury (Phone)

**Member(s) Absent**

Orville Pratt

**Staff Members Present**

Danny Holcomb, Transit Director (ZOOM); Ernest Apodaca, Administrative Assistant (ZOOM); Sandra Saiz, Transit Manager Fixed-Route Operations (ZOOM)

**Visitors Present**

Peter Rice (ZOOM)

**Call to Order**

Israel Chavez, Chair called the meeting to order at 4:20 pm.

**Approval of Agenda**

Israel Chavez, Chair asked for a motion to approve the April 09, 2020 agenda as presented, William Moore made a motion to accept the agenda and Steve Pilon 2nd the motion. The motion was unanimously approved by the Transit Advisory Board (TAB) Members.

**Approval of Minutes**

Israel Chavez, Chair asked for a motion to approve the February 13, 2020 minutes, Patricia Salisbury made a motion to accept the minutes and Christopher Ramirez 2nd the motion. It was approved by the Transit Advisory Board (TAB) Members with Mr. Miller and Mr. Moore abstaining since there were not present at the February meeting.

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

Peter Rice-He wanted to know if there was any public notice of this meeting and Director Holcomb answered his question stating, “probably not because we found out about it (this meeting) to late.”

**TAB Chairperson’s Report – Israel Chavez**

Mr. Chavez started his report by discussing the current local state of emergency due to the Coronavirus and how the mayor of Albuquerque said meetings can occur but only through video conferencing. He explained that he has been in contact with Director Holcomb of how the Transit Department is handing the virus outbreak and has the utmost confidence they have been keeping the buses clean during this time of crisis. It is his understanding that a lot of people are still using the public transportation system to meet the essential requirements of daily living.

During the TAB chairperson’s report, Mr. Ramirez wanted everyone to know that there’s an equity campaign going on and has a letter he’d like to share with his fellow TAB members. There was also a brief discussion about the TAB members pushing to have the free fare for all buses during the Covid-19 outbreak.

**Director’s Report-Danny Holcomb, Transit Director**

Director Holcomb started his report by thanking his employees for going above and beyond their duties to keep services going and is very proud of his department during this time of crisis. He also thanked Sandra Saiz for planning and implanting the Saturday schedule on such short notice. We got it done in record time and this goes to Sandra and her efforts to making it work. Next, he discussed the ridership numbers which were down 17% compared to last year, this is mainly due to Covid-19 and the fact ABQ Ride switched to a Saturday schedule. When we switched to that schedule, we noticed buses were bunching up together so we added helper buses and that resolved the issue. The next thing we did was instruct our drivers to pick up or transport about 15 people at a time and when the limit is reached the driver will go into a drop off the only mode.

During the director's report, Ms. Saiz went into further details on how the department is adding helper buses, how we're making sure the buses are being cleaned at the end of the bus line, getting cleaner with gloves to drivers and how we have repurposed maintenance staff to help keep the buses sanitized. She then mentioned how some ABQ Ride facilities have been broken into and cleaning supplies were stolen as a result of the break-ins.

TAB Member question(s):

Israel Chavez-are the drivers being provided any personal protective equipment like face masks or anything like that? *Holcomb's response: we bought a whole bunch of things that we needed to make masks, our customer service reps are cutting out patterns and we have an administrative assistant who's like this master seamstress that’s putting them all together. We also have some drivers that have donated masks.*

Israel Chavez-has the mayor authorized additional leave for employees? *Holcomb's response: No, but they're still covered, so if either the employee or a family member has any type of symptoms, they're covered under city time worked which is essentially just another classification they are being paid and it doesn’t come out of their time.*

Rachel Hertzman-how many face masks would be needed for bus drivers? *Holcomb's response: ideally for our department about 500 masks, our city warehouse stated they found a supplier, I ordered masks for every employee, I asked for at least one for every employee and we should get those masks next week hopefully.*

During the TAB member questions, Brendan Miller suggested in helping to promote social distancing it would be a great idea to let passengers board through the back door of the bus. Patricia Salisbury also mentioned how free fare would be great during this Covid-19 pandemic especially for those that have purchased bus passes for the month. There was also a discussion regarding the twenty-five billion-dollar federal stimulus package approved by the US congress and when ABQ ride could see that money. The TAB members then discussed how they will push for free fares for Albuquerque, they will work together to get face masks for the transit department and how much they are thankful for all the employees continuing to work throughout this unprecedented time of crisis.

Lastly, Director Holcomb mentioned the department did contact the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) and they want more than just ABQ ride for us to join their organization and he needs to reach out to a couple of other department directors to see if they'd be willing to be part of that organization.

**Unfinished Business**

Wasn’t mentioned.

**New Business**

Wasn’t mentioned.

**Announcements**

There were no announcements.

**Adjournment**

Israel Chavez, Chair asked for a motion to adjourn, Harris Balkin motioned to adjourn, Kathy Foster 2nd the Motion and it was approved unanimously by the TAB members. Meeting adjourned at 5:01 pm.

**Next Meeting: Thursday, May 14, 2020; 4:00 PM via online (ZOOM)**