



Transit Advisory Board  
Thursday, August 8, 2019  
Alvarado Transit Center – 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
100 1<sup>st</sup> St. SW  
Albuquerque, NM 87102

**Members Present**

Israel Chavez, Chair (dropped off); Brendan Miller, Vice Chair (walked); Rachel Hertzman, (car); Orville Pratt, (bus); Harris Balkin, (walked); Patricia Salisbury (bus); Kathy Foster, (bus); Christopher Ramirez, (walked); Jacqueline Smith, Para-TAB, Chairperson (car)

**Members Absent - Excused**

Steve Pilon and William Moore

**Staff Members Present**

Santiago Chavez, Chief of Staff, (car); Stephanie Dominguez, Deputy Director, (car) Rita Chavez, Executive Assistant; (car)

**Visitors Present**

Kimberly Andujo, City of Albuquerque Volunteer, (walked); Peter Rice, Downtown Albuquerque News (bike); Brian Schobel, APS (drove); Isaiah Ventura, Student at Technology Leadership High School and a Youth Organizer with Together for Brothers, (bus).

**Call to Order**

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

**Resignation**

With apprehension Kimberly Andujo announced her resignation from the TAB Board. She currently works in the Mayor' office as a volunteer through AmeriCorps Vista and does not want her membership on the TAB Board to be considered a conflict of interest, hence her resignation effective immediately.

**Approval of Agenda**

Israel Chavez, Chair, asked for a Motion to approve the July 11, 2019 agenda as presented. Christopher Ramirez asked to amend the agenda to add under New Business, Transit Town Hall. Patricia Salisbury made a motion to accept the agenda as amended. Harris Balkin, 2<sup>nd</sup> the Motion. Motion approved unanimously, 7-0 by Transit Advisory Board (TAB) Members.

**Approval of Minutes**

Israel Chavez, Chair asked for a Motion to approve the July 11, 2019 minutes as presented. Christopher Ramirez made a motion to accept the minutes as presented. Kathy Foster, 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion. Motion approved unanimously, 7-0 by Transit Advisory Board (TAB) Members.

**Election**

TAB officer elections were held at the July 11, 2019 meeting; however a re-vote must be completed. The Robert's Rules of Order states that a secret ballot election may take place; however, under the City Ordinances there cannot be a secret ballot vote because we are a public board; therefore, the votes must be made public.

Brendan Miller self-nominated for Vice Chairperson and there no other nominations. Patricia Salisbury made a motion to close nominations, Christopher Ramirez, 2<sup>nd</sup> the Motion. Motion approved unanimously, 7-0.

### **Election (Cont.)**

Israel Chavez, made a motion to accept Brendan Miller's self-nomination as Vice Chair by acclamation and public vote: Harris Balkin made a motion to acclimate Brendan Miller's self-nomination as Vice Chair for the Transit Advisory Board (TAB) for the current fiscal year by public vote. Orville Pratt, 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion, Vote: Rachel Hertzman, (Yes); Orville Pratt, (Yes); Harris Balkin, (Yes); Patrician Salisbury; (Yes); Kathy Foster, (Yes); Christopher Ramirez, (Yes); Israel Chavez (Yes). Motion approved unanimously, 7-0 by Transit Advisory Board (TAB) Members.

### **Resolutions**

Brenda Miller made a motion to accept the 2020 TAB Meeting Dates Resolution with the correction of the date to reflect the 2020 fiscal year and delete reference to the 2019 year. Orville Pratt, 2<sup>nd</sup> the Motion. None Opposed, Motion approved unanimously 7-0 by the Transit Advisory Board (TAB) Members.

**Public Comment** – Reminder there is a 2 minute limit on Public Comment  
No Public Comments

### **Chairperson Report, Israel Chavez**

Israel's goal for TAB is to be a conduit for Transit, City's Administration's and for the public. Israel would like more members of the Public attend TAB meetings to have discussions with them regarding transit concerns, comments and ideas. Israel would like to see Transit succeed and he feels one way for this to happen would be to hold Town Halls and listen to the public's thoughts and ideas. He would like for TAB members to bring ideas via presentations to the Board i.e. projects, ways to outreach and ways to establish a better relationship with City Councilors. He will to work with the Transit Department to keep the Board informed of news within the Transit Department. He would also like the meetings to flow and stay on time. During topics of conversation he will ensure sure each TAB member is allowed to speak at least once in order for all comments to be heard. For those members who would like to dedicate more time to specific areas should think about creating sub-committees to have a focused group on projects. These are just a few ideas that Israel has for TAB to focus on this year.

**Public Comment** – Reminder there is a 2 minute limit on Public Comment

Isaiah Ventura, Student at Technology Leadership High School and Youth Organizer with Together for Brothers - Isaiah extended an invitation to the TAB members to attend a T4B Summer Celebration and Transit Equity PhotoVoice Exhibition on Monday, August 12 from 6:00pm to 8:00 pm at the Simms Building at 400 Gold Ave. SW, Suite 700. The PhotoVoice was created by asking young men of color to take photos with captions focusing on the transit system. This gives young men an opportunity to share a transit experience telling their own story. The photos and captions show transit safety, condition of bus stops, brochures and maps. These photos are very powerful and capture emotion in the images.

Together 4 Brothers is working with a soccer cohort in Wilson Park with Parks and Recreation to make City Parks more accessible to the community while not disturbing the homeless who are in the parks. T4B has a bicycle cohort downtown where young men are learning how to build and maintain their own bikes. When their finished with the program they will each have their own bicycle. T4B has been working with West Mesa Community Center along with Family and Community Services on an ART cohort. Each of these cohorts are contributing photos to the PhotoVoice Exhibition. Together for Brothers is also working with Cultural Services to identify a venue where this PhotoVoice exhibit can be displayed to the public.

### **Director's Report- Stephanie Dominguez, Deputy Director**

Transit Director, Bernie Toon has resigned his position effective August 30<sup>th</sup> and in the interim we have Santiago Chavez, Chief of Staff and Deputy Chief Administrative Officer from the Mayor's office to assist in the transition.

### **Director's Report- Stephanie Dominguez, Deputy Director (Cont).**

Santiago Chavez has been with the City for a little over six months and has been working with the Mayor on Special Projects such as Vision Zero, to reduce accidents and fatalities on the roadways. He has also been assigned to several departments who have specific needs and working with various boards. Santiago has a finance background and for the last 8-years was working with the Association of Counties. He was the Director of Finance for Administrative Services, lobbyist and did policy work. Santiago's career has been in Public Finance and Public Administration. He is happy to be with Transit to help Director Toon with the transition.

The Transit Department received a \$2.78 million dollar FTA Grant for Lo-No Emissions Program, which funds the deployment of transit buses and infrastructure that use advanced propulsion technologies. Thirty-Eight states will each receive funding through the program and Albuquerque was awarded one of the highest grants. As an estimate transit will be looking at purchasing 5 electric buses and their charging stations this process we will have to go through the competitive procurement process.

In July there were 755,491 passengers and this is -3.3% down from last July. At the next TAB meeting Transit will provide ridership data as it pertains to the Freedom 4<sup>th</sup> event.

On July 22<sup>nd</sup> the ART bus driver training began so you should see the buses on the Central corridor.

### **Questions to Transit Department from TAB members**

*Rachel Hertzman - The \$2.78 million FTA Grant that was received is that in addition to any other funding received? The No-Lo Grant money is not tied to Art. This Grant is solely for purchasing approximately 5 electric buses that will be used on fixed routes.*

*Christopher Ramirez - In the Westgate area and International District Together for Brothers found that the maps and/or schedules have not been updated in many years and in one case 7-years. How often the maps and brochures are updated at the various bus stops within the city and can an update be provided? Yes, we can get someone to give an update at the next TAB meeting.*

*Kathy Foster – How is the data on the fixed route ridership gathered and does Transit know why the decrease in ridership? Data is collected based on ridership counts, which is gathered by the drivers at the fare boxes, so as the passengers board the bus they are counted. Also, some of the ideas that have come up regarding the decline in ridership could be due to the increase in ride share programs, such as UBER and Lyft. The gas prices continued to decline for the month of July.*

*Jacqueline Smith – With regard to the maintenance of the bus stops. How does Transit know when a stop is in need of repair? The bus stops are reviewed by transit staff and Transit relies on the public to let us know when a stop is in need of repairs. This can be through 311 calls, direct transit customer service line and on-line.*

*Brendan Miller – Brendan agrees that the schedules should be updated at least once a year and at the same time each year with a revision date printed on the map or brochure with a notation when a change occurs. There are stops that are served by two routes and at times there is only one schedule for a route posted. The bus stops should have both route schedules posted.*

*Israel Chavez – Israel realizes that replacing the schedules once a year might be cost prohibited and would like to suggest ways the TAB members could advocate to Council members to explain transit needs and see if the City Council can help with some form of funding.*

*Harris Balkin – Harris would like to receive Press Release Information from the Transit Department. He saw the release about the No-Lo Grant and had heard nothing about this. Stephanie stated she would be happy to look into streamlining that process for the TAB members.*

### **Questions to Transit Department from TAB members (Cont).**

*Patricia Salisbury – Patricia believes that the incorrect information affects ridership. For instance, on weekends and holidays the bus stop announcement should reflect the correct route schedule i.e. the 12<sup>th</sup> and Menaul bus route 36 or 37 the announcement states get off here for the Menaul bus and the bus does not stop at that point on holidays or weekends. There are so many business in that area that can affect their visitors for instance there is the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center, Job Corp, several restaurants and a hotel so, since most of the riders are unaware of this you will have people waiting for a bus that will never stop. This is a big problem that should be addressed. The bus announcements should reflect the accurate information for each stop each day.*

*Orville Pratt – Was the quality of the electric buses reviewed, in other words, are the buses able to get up the hills in the City and keep a good charge? Santiago stated the original electric buses were for ART lanes only. The buses were 60ft and the technology was just not able to meet the needs of the ART corridor. The electric buses that the Transit Department is reviewing are shorter buses and do have the technology to get up and down hills while staying charged. A test drive of the electric bus was done a few days ago by the Transit Department and the bus ran all day long and went up 9-mile hill without losing power or shutting down and keeping the charge at 78%. Again, the electric buses will be used on fixed routes not on the ART corridor. The two buses that Transit has looked at are the New Flyer and Proterra 40 ft. electric buses.*

*Santiago Chavez –The Transit Department does have quite a few budgetary constraints and appreciates the TAB advocating for the Transit Department. City Council approves the operating budget and Transit Administration makes the decisions on how the money is administered. Santiago is currently meeting with several departments within transit such as, operations, finance, maintenance and administrative staff and has been learning quite a bit about the department and he appreciates all the questions, information and feedback that was shared today.*

### **Unfinished Business**

**Community Involvement in RFP Process with Transit:** Christopher forwarded some community involvement ideas and alternate ways to conduct the RFP process showing the community involvement to Annette last month and would like to know where Transit is on the RFP process and how community involvement will be addressed? Was the Transit Administration able to see the ideas that Chris sent for viewing? Transit is still in the process of developing the scope of work for the route study, procurement process and community involvement, which is a large portion of the scope of work.

TAB members would really like to encourage the Transit Department to look outside the box when it comes to including the community in the transit study. TAB members would like to see the engagement of bus riders who really depend on public transportation and talk to those who do not ride the bus to find out why and how transit can meet their needs. This seem to be a more efficient way of engagement rather than publishing meetings in the newspapers. TAB hopes that transit will change the view of how to truly include the community in the RFP process. TAB members should write a Resolution asking the Transit Department to provide specific guidelines when including the community in the RFP process. **ACTION: Christopher Ramirez will create a Resolution to include the community in the transit study for the TAB members to review, approve and submit to the Transit Department**

*Harris Balkin – Is there a time-line for this scope of work to be completed and where is the Transit Department in the timeline? The scope of work should be completed by June 2020. No money has been spent on this project and it has a budget of \$200,000 to be obligated.*

### **Unfinished Business (Cont.)**

*Kathy Foster – How do the TAB members feel about gathering information and conducting a needs analysis to present to the Transit Department. How does TAB and transit feel about having a community member at large included in this entire process? Does the Transit Department plan on getting community involvement when creating the scope of work for the RFP? Other cities such as Houston and Austin have recently completed this entire process and the Transit Department is reviewing those cities scope of work to help determine what is needed for our transit study.*

**Fixed Route Bus Pass:** In the past TAB members have received a bus pass to ride the bus for free on an annual basis. The policy was recently re-evaluated and due to the Anti-Donation policy, the government cannot give a private citizen any “free” benefit for serving on a board. The Transit Department is complying with this law and will no longer provide a bus pass to the TAB members. TAB members will be provided a bus pass to get to and from the TAB meetings if needed. You can let transit know if a bus pass is needed to attend the TAB meetings and one will be provided.

### **New Business**

**Sub-Committee:** Does any TAB member have any ideas about sub-committees? At the next meeting the TAB members should bring ideas about sub-committees that can be created i.e. Community Outreach sub-committee

**Open Records Ordinance:** There is an Open Records Ordinance that TAB members must comply with, which means when TAB members vote it must be public and there should be no private or secret meetings. This means the TAB members could not meet outside as a group to have discussions about meetings. TAB would only be able to engage with the public at those meetings.

### **Christopher Ramirez, Transit Town Hall:**

Christopher Ramirez works for an organization called Together for Brothers (T4B) and he is an avid bus rider who lives in the International District. Together for Brothers does work with young people around the city and transportation impacts these young people’s health, education and social lives. Together 4 Brothers would like to invite the Transit Department to co-host a town hall style meeting in the fall of 2019 with a focus on youth ridership at an accessible location in the International District, as T4B believe this is where some of the highest need is in the city. He hopes is this can be a start of a series of Town Halls hosted around the city to encourage engagement and public participation. We can look at holding Town Hall meetings at various venues around the city.

Together for Brothers would also like to involve people from the various departments within the city to collaborate on improving the lives of people within the city. Examples of departments

- Transit
- Cultural Services
- Family & Community Services
- Parks & Recreation
- Senior Affairs
- Equity & Inclusion
- City Council

When these meeting are conducted we would like to look at various ways for attendees to give public comment. There are over 40 languages spoken within the city and there are language barriers. What if we look at other opportunities to allow people to get their points across either through pictures or activities that can allow us to get more information and participation.

Santiago Chavez – Santiago feels that this is a great idea and the city has facilitated other Town Halls. This is a concern of the mayor and it would be great to get seniors, veterans, adults and youth involved with all forms of transit within the city. **ACTION: Christopher Ramirez will work on a task list for the next meeting**

**Public Comment** – Reminder there is a 2 minute limit on Public Comment

Brain Schobel, District Resource Teacher for transition students

Brian works with youth from age 14 to 22 who have disabilities and the greatest barrier for these students to get around is transportation. They have very limited resources to purchase bus passes. APS and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) does purchase bus passes for the purpose of training but still does not solve the situation. APS and DVR along with other entities would like to pull their resources and look at getting a similar deal like UNM and CNM where the students can get a stamp on their student ID's to ride the bus. We can secure riders by teaching them how to ride a bus, which allows them to see how easy and safe a bus ride is. We would like to invite the TAB members to attend a meeting so that we can further discuss a possible collaboration.

The TAB members have had frequent discussions about this situation and the TAB members recently submitted a Resolution to City Administration, City Councilors and County Commissioners stating how they support a collaboration between APS and the City for students to receive a bus pass but APS would have to contribute funds to make this happen.

**Announcements**

The Para Transit Advisory Board next meeting will be held on Tuesday, September 17<sup>th</sup>, 10:30am to 12:00pm at the ATC, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor.

**Adjournment**

The TAB meeting was adjourned at 5:28pm by Israel Chavez, Chair.

**Next Meeting: Thursday, September 19, 2019; 4:00 PM at the ATC-2<sup>nd</sup> Floor**