

**Transit Advisory Board Agenda**

Thursday, November 12, 2020

4:00 pm to 5:30 pm

Virtual Meeting (Online) Via ZOOM

Meeting ID: 987 1480 2483

Phone#: 1 669 900 6833 or 1 253 215 8782

**Members Present**

Christopher Ramirez, Chair (ZOOM); Kathy Foster, Vice Chair (ZOOM); Harris Balkin (ZOOM); Rachel Hertzman (ZOOM); Brendan Miller (ZOOM)); William Moore (Phone); Steve Pilon (ZOOM); Orville Pratt (ABSENT), Patricia Salisbury (Phone & ZOOM)

**Staff Members Present**

Danny Holcomb, Director (ZOOM); Margaret Lucero, Executive Assistant (Phone & ZOOM); Mario Portillo, Division Maintenance Manager (ZOOM)

**Visitors Present**

Nate Begay, Valle de Oro, National Wildlife Refuge (ZOOM); Rex Colorado, New Flyer of America (ZOOM); Peter Rice, Downtown Albuquerque News (ZOOM), Rachel, Wilderness Society (ZOOM)

**Land Acknowledgement**

Chair Ramirez would like to start off the meeting with a land acknowledge. The City of Albuquerque is on indigenous land and referred to as Tiwa land. That is currently represented by Sandia and Isleta pueblos, but also other pueblos that are no longer inexistent. We ask for permission and blessing for us to be here and serve the community.

**Call to Order**

Christopher Ramirez, Chair, began the meeting at 4:04 pm.

**Approval of Agenda or Additions**

Chair Ramirez asked for a motion to approve the November 12, 2020 agenda. Harris Balkin moved to approve the agenda and Kathy Foster 2nd the motion. The motion was voice approved by Harris Balkin, Kathy Foster, Rachel Hertzman, Brendan Miller, William Moore, Steve Pilon and Patricia Salisbury.

**Approval of Minutes**

Chair Ramirez asked for a motion to approve the October 8, 2020 minutes. Brandon Miller requested an edit on page three to change moral to morale. Brandon Miller made a motion to approve the amended minutes and Patricia Salisbury 2nd the motion. The motion was voice approved by Harris Balkin, Kathy Foster, Rachel Hertzman, Brendan Miller, William Moore, Steve Pilon and Patricia Salisbury.

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

Brendan Miller: I would like to approach a few vendors that would be willing to partner with the City of Albuquerque to sell bus passes. What would the process be to add a new vendor?

Patricia Salisbury: I did ask that this also be added to the agenda. It is also impossible to get Sunvan passes from the docks and the Alvarado Transportation Center is closed on weekends. There is not enough Albertsons around the city to satisfy the needs of those who need to buy tickets.

Chris Ramirez: I apologize, Ms. Salisbury, I had received your email after I sent the agenda to Ms. Lucero. We can ask Mr. Holcomb to address that during the Director’s report and can add that as an agenda item for the December’s meeting.

**TAB Chairperson’s Report – Christopher Ramirez**

Chair Ramirez: Transit equity day is on February 4, this is a National Day to celebrate Rosa Park’s birthday. The past two years Transit has offered free rides on that day and has done some public information sharing about that. The Mayor has also proclaimed February 4 as Equity day in Albuquerque. I’m looking forward to working with Transit about that happening again for 2021.

Patricia Salisbury: I would like to recommend, in addition to free fares On February 4, that information about Rosa Parks is posted on the buses.

**Director’s Report-Danny Holcomb**

Danny Holcomb began his report with ridership numbers. October’s ridership was 378,371 passengers for fixed route, compared to October of last year this is a decrease of about 53.6 percent. The decrease is due to COVID. We are looking into possibly reducing service, but need to make sure we have the driver’s available to pull out, cover as many routes we need to and meet the service we’re advertising. We are really close to providing Sunvan tickets online. We can do that for fixed route, but we are working on the parameters and policies for Sunvan. I’d like to keep the Equity Day on the agenda so we can work on some language and signage with our Marketing Department, whom I will invite to the next meeting.

The FY21 proposed operating budget for Transit is 47 million 356 thousand dollars and that accounts for 504 employees. The proposed budget includes a reduction in funding of 6.3 million dollars that will be covered by the CARES funding. 2.7 million dollars was reduced for midyear reorganization of Transit security, they now report to Department of Municipal Development. 1.4 million dollars was added to driver overtime and ART costs. 1.1 million dollars is reduced in the fuel section. The general fund subsidy decreases by 8.3 million dollars.

Brendan Miller: Can you look into keeping the numbers 5, 8, 11 and 157 at every 30 minutes, instead of the 20 to 25 minutes and increase the 31 Wyoming from 45 to 30 minutes and the two Eubanks from 60 to 30 minutes, so everything in the heights will be run at that frequency for cost and ridership wise.

Danny Holcomb: Yes, Mr. Miller, we can look at that. In terms of drivers, we had to pull some Sunvan drivers over the weekend to cover some of our logistic services. We have more flexibility with Sunvan routes and drivers, so we may start using them to help reduce crowding on the other buses. We want to run as much service as we can to serve the community. We proposed in the FY21 budget an increase in our driver’s salaries. The pay for our drivers compared to solid waste drivers is significantly lower. We are trying to come up with a hiring bonus to encourage more applicants to Transit. We’re also coming up with new ways to recruit people. Transit driver shortage is nationwide, which is a common problem.

Rachel Hertzman: The ridership from October 2019 is down 56 percent can you explain how that information is allocated into the budget, since we’re not sure when things will start ramping back up. Will there be other physical locations where the tickets can be equitably distributed throughout Albuquerque. Also are there any limiting factors like purchasing or supplier agreements?

Danny Holcomb: Regarding the ridership numbers, we were anticipating a certain amount of riders, but know we aren’t going to get there. We were allocated CARES money that will help cover those costs where we are short. You can still pay on the bus or van, no prepay is required. We are trying to solicit Smith’s, Urgent Cares, doctor’s offices and hospitals to see if they are interested in carrying Sunvan passes.

Chris Ramirez: Clarified Fiscal year 2021 from July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021, so we are in the current fiscal year, correct?

Danny Holcomb: Yes, because of COVID they stalled the budget process until last month.

Chris Ramirez: What is the likelihood of extending the hours past 6pm on the 36 and 37 and operating on Sundays?

Danny Holcomb: We are working on the bids right now and can look at our options to see if that is a possibility.

Chris Ramirez: Is the 47 million dollars inclusive of the CARES money for this current fiscal year?

Danny Holcomb: It is not. Our budget was decreased by 8.3 million, because we will use 6.3 million dollars to help with this fiscal year’s budget.

Harris Balkin: What can we do to help you express the importance of the increase of the driver’s salaries?

Danny Holcomb: Go to the City Council meetings in the next couple months when we are starting our FY22 budget process log on to be speaker and be an advocate for the drivers. The union that negotiates salaries for solid waste is the same union that negotiates the salaries for our drivers.

Steve Pilon: What I understand is the head of the union that represents both of them is with solid waste and may be why they are paid more. I’m trying to get clarification on the budget numbers.

Danny Holcomb: I can send a breakdown of the budget to Mr. Ramirez or ask Ms. Lucero to send it so the document can be shared with everyone.

Patricia Salisbury: What is the current pay for bus and Sunvan drivers? Will Sunvan coupons ever be available on the ART docks?

Danny Holcomb: Sunvan tickets are available on the ART platforms. This week we hired a permanent employee to work on the ticket vending machines. Our hope is to get all the machines up to speed and get them working as soon as possible. The starting pay for a Sunvan driver is $14.08/hr, bus driver is $16.32/ hr. and solid waste driver is $18.34/ hr.

**Unfinished Business**

Chair Ramirez: Any update on RFP study?

Danny Holcomb: We hope to get that out by early 2021. I would like to include some input from you, Mr. Ramirez or members of the advisory board.

Rachel Hertzman: Regarding the budget, in the future when we recover, will there be a lower budget allocation for Transit because of the federal supplement that will not be available?

Danny Holcomb: I don’t know what the future budget will look like.

Chris Ramirez: To clarify, there is not a guarantee of budget moving forward in the future. We, as a board, can advocate for increase in driver pay and will have additional information on that in December.

Steve Pilon: Has the RFP been assigned to someone in the department?

Danny Holcomb: It’s a regular reoccurring meeting item for Andrew de Garmo, Mr. Baten, Ms. Dominguez and myself.

Chris Ramirez: ABQRide Engagement projects: We are looking into doing staff appreciation in December, Community Feedback & Town Hall January to March 2021 and Central Avenue Bus Stop Station Clean up April to June 2021. If there are members on TAB that would like to join me in these projects. I am open to feedback on ideas.

Brendan Miller: We can draft and circulate a staff appreciation email to drivers.

Patricia Salisbury: I think these projects look great and would love to participate.

Chris Ramirez: Transit’s looking at extending free fares for seniors?

Danny Holcomb: We are trying to gradually get there and seniors are the next area for that.

Steve Pilon: What would we do with donations? How would they be distributed? The stations have been getting picked up on a regular basis

Chris Ramirez: Donations could include breakfast burritos, food boxes or donations from local vendors. We would also ask for volunteers from the board for bus stop clean up.

Brendan Miller: I would be interested in being involved in any projects in the north and south valley and the Westside.

Chris Ramirez: If you are in agreement, give me a thumbs up, and we can move forward with the recommendation.

*(Harris Balkin, Brendan miller, Rachel Hertzman, Kathy Foster, Steve Pilon, Patricia Salisbury and Bill Moore gave a thumbs up)*

Chris Ramirez: Any update on San Pedro ART station?

Danny Holcomb: The original FTA documents that was submitted for ART, the San Pedro station was not included as a potential stop. So we did not receive funding. The cost to add San Pedro to services is 1 to 1.5 million dollars. We’re interested in doing it, it’s just a matter of finding the funding for it.

Chris Ramirez: I have reached out to Senator Heinrich to help identify potential federal opportunities for funding to get station completed. I am invested in working with neighborhood leaders to see this ART station completed.

**New Business**

Mario Portillo: Bus stop maintenance is managed with a small staff. Crews are assigned to certain quadrants of the city to pick up trash, pressure wash concrete and graffiti, clean and sanitize TVM’s, respond to 311 call or concerns. We are in the process of replacing trashcans at the ART stations. We do our best to maintain over 2,000 bus stops. We use fog machines daily to sanitize the buses the solution is safe to the touch, it does not pose any hazard. We’re making sure everything is sanitized and we want to keep everyone safe.

Patricia Salisbury: How often are Sunvans sanitized with foggers?

Mario Portillo: Every day the buses are out they get fogged. The solution we use is Vitalixide.

Chris Ramirez: Can we add that information to the website for the community? Are the more frequently used bused being cleaned more?

Danny Holcomb: Every bus is cleaned every day. The buses that pull into the ATC (Alvarado Transportation Center) receive additional cleaning as much as we can. All of our drivers and road supervisors have cleaning products, gloves and masks. We have a couple different avenues to keep things cleaned and sanitized.

Chris Ramirez: If there are other ways we can work with Mr. Freeman to get that information out on social media and add to website to help the community understand the efforts that ABQRide is going through to keep the buses clean.

Danny Holcomb: We can certainly get that out on our social media and website.

Harris Balkin: If you can get more zombies, you had during Halloween, to block off the seats that will help social distancing. That was a great idea.

Mario Portillo: We do our best every day to go through the buses to make sure that seats are blocked off.

Steve Pilon: Thank you for the efforts that Transit has made to make them safe to ride. Has there been any improvement in compliance with passengers wearing their masks?

Danny Holcomb: Yes and no, we’ve had some drivers that have been assaulted. Some passengers just refuse to wear a mask. We will contact security to have them removed. If someone gets on the bus and they claim to have a waiver or documentation that they can’t wear a mask we let them on the bus so our driver does not get into any confrontations.

Chris Ramirez: I would encourage Transit to continue posting the mask policy at the stops.

*Houston Transit System presentation by Steve Pilon was rescheduled for the December meeting.*

**Second Round of Public** *Reminder there is a 2 minute limit on Public Comment(s).*

No public comment

**Adjournment**

Chair Ramirez, chair asked for a motion to adjourn, Rachel Hertzman motioned to adjourn meeting. Harris Balkin 2nd the motion. Meeting adjourned at 5:29 pm

**Next Meeting: Thursday, December 10, 2020; 4:00 PM via online (ZOOM)**

**Below are the chat messages exchanged during the ZOOM Meeting**

16:06:41 From Kathy Foster : Awesome, Mr. Miller!

16:08:14 From Kathy Foster : What a beautiful background, Mr. Holcomb!

16:13:39 From Rachel S-F (she/her) : Nothing for me today, but thank you!

16:13:55 From Nate Begay, he/him : Nothing for me as well, thank you!

16:14:18 From Christopher Ramirez : Thanks Rachel and Nate.

16:16:04 From Rachel Hertzman : is there a vendor agreement that limits sales of tickets to Albertson's etc...?

16:22:48 From Margaret Lucero to Christopher Ramirez(Privately) : FYI: New number attended meeting

16:22:59 From Rachel Hertzman : Thank you for the info about online ticket purchase with fixed routes. Is there any chance that they will be available at additional bricks and mortar locations in terms of folks who don't have online access?

16:24:09 From Christopher Ramirez to Margaret Lucero(Privately) : Thank you I will follow up

16:24:30 From Christopher Ramirez : Mr. Miller

16:24:33 From Christopher Ramirez : Ms. Hertzman

16:25:24 From Christopher Ramirez : Mr. Ramirez

16:26:55 From Christopher Ramirez : Mr. Balkin

16:27:49 From Kathy Foster : Mr. Ramirez, may I please ask a question related to driver pay? Thank you.

16:28:01 From Christopher Ramirez : Yes.

16:28:04 From Christopher Ramirez : Mrs. Foster

16:28:34 From Steve Pilon : I also have a question for Danny

16:28:50 From Christopher Ramirez : Will add you to the list.

16:28:52 From Christopher Ramirez : Mr. Pilon

16:35:09 From Kathy Foster : Mr. Balkin just asked the question I was going to ask. Thank you Mr. Balkin.

16:35:37 From Kathy Foster : I won't need to ask a question at this time.

16:35:48 From Christopher Ramirez : Thanks Mrs. Foster

16:44:53 From Steve Pilon : q re RFP

16:49:26 From Christopher Ramirez to Margaret Lucero(Privately) : Can you please make me a co-host so I can present or allow for me to share my screen?

16:50:04 From Margaret Lucero to Christopher Ramirez(Privately) : Yes

16:51:52 From Rachel Hertzman : Thanks, Mr. Holcomb for the edification!

16:57:22 From Steve Pilon : How do you raise hand in Zoom?

16:57:40 From Steve Pilon : I have a question

16:58:32 From Nate Begay, he/him : Click on participants and in the participants bar, click on the blue "raise hand" button at the bottom

16:58:44 From Kathy Foster : I would support an inter-generational activity

16:58:53 From Nate Begay, he/him : and click on the bottom again to lower your hand

16:59:08 From Nate Begay, he/him : button

16:59:24 From Steve Pilon : Thanks Nate

17:06:03 From Margaret Lucero to Christopher Ramirez(Privately) : Patricia gave a thumbs up

17:06:46 From Christopher Ramirez to Margaret Lucero(Privately) : Thanks Margaret

17:20:56 From Margaret Lucero to Christopher Ramirez(Privately) : Will I need to extend the time?

17:21:34 From Christopher Ramirez to Margaret Lucero(Privately) : We will end by 5:30

17:21:59 From Christopher Ramirez to Margaret Lucero(Privately) : We can reschedule Mr. Pilon’s presentation

17:22:06 From Christopher Ramirez to Margaret Lucero(Privately) : Thanks for the communication

17:22:17 From Margaret Lucero to Christopher Ramirez(Privately) : ok, ZOOM will end it by 5:30

17:22:27 From Christopher Ramirez to Margaret Lucero(Privately) : Thanks again