

**REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
WASHOE COUNTY, NEVADA**

FRIDAY

9:00 A.M.

December 7, 2018

PRESENT:

**Bob Lucey, Washoe County Commissioner, Vice Chairman
Kristopher Dahir, Sparks City Council Member (alternate)
Oscar Delgado, Reno City Council Member (alternate)
Vaughn Hartung, Washoe County Commissioner
Neoma Jardon, Reno City Council Member**

**Lee G. Gibson, RTC Executive Director
Dale Ferguson, Legal Counsel
Rudy Malfabon, Director of NDOT**

NOT PRESENT: Ron Smith, Sparks Mayor, Chairman

This specially dated monthly meeting, held in the Chambers of the Washoe County Commission, 1001 E. 9th Street, Reno, Nevada, was called to order by Vice Chairman Lucey. Following the roll call and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of our country, the Board conducted the following business:

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS, RECOGNITIONS, OTHER:

RECOGNITION OF THE RTC BY THE TRANSPORTATION SECURITY ADMINISTRATION (TSA) FOR ACHIEVING THE GOLD STANDARD FOR MASS TRANSIT

Mr. Bob McGuire from the TSA presented a plaque and spoke in recognition of the RTC and Mr. Robert Reeder, RTC Safety and Security Manager, for their dedication to a strong security and safety program for our passengers and the community.

Mr. Reeder then addressed the Board and thanked Mr. McGuire and the TSA along with MV Transportation for their help with this accomplishment.

Item 1 APPROVAL OF AGENDA

On motion of Commissioner Jardon, seconded by Commissioner Hartung, which motion unanimously carried, Vice Chairman Lucey ordered that the agenda for this meeting be approved.

Item 2.1 PUBLIC INPUT

Vice Chairman Lucey opened the meeting to public input and called on anyone wishing to speak on topics relevant to the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) that are not included in the current agenda.

Mr. Carlos Elizondo, local resident, requested that the RTC and the Board do something about the RIDE driver shortage.

There being no one else wishing to speak, the Vice Chair closed public input.

Item 3.1 thru 3.4 CONSENT ITEMS

Engineering

3.1 Acknowledge receipt of the monthly Engineering Activity Report (For Possible Action)

Procurement and Contracts

3.2 Approve a Professional Services Agreement (PSA) with Lumos and Associates for the 2019 Preventive Maintenance Program project for design services and construction management services in the amount of \$748,520; authorize the RTC Executive Director to execute the agreement (For Possible Action)

3.3 Authorize RTC to provide \$5,500 to the City of Sparks for traffic, bicycle and pedestrian data collection on Baring Boulevard (For Possible Action)

Inter-Agency Contracts

3.4 Approve an Interlocal Agreement between Tahoe Transportation District (TTD), Douglas County, Carson City Regional Transportation Commission, and the Regional Transportation Commission of Washoe County (RTC) for the Provision of Regular, Fixed-Route, Commuter Express Public Transit Services between Carson City, Nevada; the Communities of Minden/Gardnerville, Nevada; and South Lake Tahoe, California (For Possible Action)

On motion of Commissioner Jardon, seconded by Commissioner Hartung, which motion carried unanimously, Vice Chairman Lucey ordered that Consent Items 3.1 through 3.4 be approved.

Item 4.1 thru 4.3 DIRECTOR REPORTS

Item 4.1 RTC Executive Director Report

E.D. Lee G. Gibson provided an update on the following matters of interest.

Welcome to Oscar Delgado, Reno City Council Member, attending as an alternate but was appointed to the Board as a commissioner beginning January 1, 2019.

The grand opening event for the 4th Street/Prater Way project will be held on December 14th at 11:00 a.m. at the El Rancho RAPID bus stations. The RTC will celebrate the completion of the

4th/Prater project and the debut of the RTC's new BRT service in this corridor, the Lincoln Line. Additionally, this will mark the milestone of 40 years of public transportation and 30 years of paratransit services in our community, as well as the addition of 17 brand new electric buses to RTC's fleet.

The RTC is offering free rides on all RTC transit services for the 34th Annual New Year's Eve FREE Safe RIDE.

The free ride service helps to promote a safe New Year's on our roads and reminds the public to be a safe driver and pedestrian by not being impaired, endangering their life and the lives of others.

The free ride service begins at 6:00 pm on New Year's Eve and runs until 2:00 am on New Year's Day. Route and schedule information will be available at rtcwashoe.com.

Commissioner Jardon also announced that another celebration was scheduled in the Brewery District for the 8th of December.

Item 4.2 RTC Federal Report

E.D. Gibson stated that a written no report was included but he did note that the RTC met with the FTA regarding allocations for the Virginia Street project. Mr. Ed Carranza, FTA Region IX Acting Regional Administrator, was also scheduled to be in attendance at the Grand Opening the following Friday.

Item 4.3 NDOT Director Report

NDOT Director Rudy Malfabon provided an update, saying that the Draft EIS would be available for public comment December 12th thru January 15th. The meeting on Dec. 12 was also going to be streamed on Facebook Live.

Next, Dir. Malfabon provided a brief update on the P3 project to widen I-80 from Sparks out to USA Parkway. He specifically said that it is important not to take anything away from the Spaghetti Bowl project financially or with the timeline.

With the continuing resolution ending today, he is hopeful that a federal budget will be approved.

Commissioner Hartung asked what the dollar figure is on the unsolicited proposal for the I-80 widening to USA Parkway.

Dir. Malfabon said that after calculating back to net present value; it came to approximately \$770 million. With regular bonding, it would be approximately \$450 million.

Commissioner Hartung is hopeful that NDOT will continue to look at other options to complete the project more quickly.

Dir. Malfabon said they would need to look at what other projects are a priority or can be pushed out to a future date. In the interim, park and ride stops and that type of traffic improvement may be possible.

Commissioner Hartung suggested that some of the businesses pay impact fees, as they are the reason for the impact.

Dir. Malfabon said it would be brought up at the next legislative session.

Commissioner Jardon asked if the unsolicited proposal offered a plan or money with a plan.

Dir. Malfabon said they offered to build it for a specific price and then NDOT would repay them with availability payments over 32 years after the road is in service. He was not able to say at this time who the proposal came from.

Commissioner Dahir asked if Storey County stepped up to collect some of the taxes to pay for the widening.

Dir. Malfabon said the County was not involved, nor were any of the private companies at the Tri Center.

Commissioner Dahir then asked how pressure could be put on Storey County and/or the businesses to speed things up. He added that 28 new businesses are planned to open and things will just get worse.

Dir. Malfabon said that it is up to the County and City managers to have those discussions.

Sondra Rosenberg, NDOT Assistant Director of Planning, addressed the Board to add that NDOT is leading a transit and commuting study around the Tri Center. They are helping to facilitate conversation and some of the businesses out there are beginning to talk about forming some sort of coalition.

Commissioner Jardon thanked Dir. Malfabon for stating for the record that any improvements made to the I-80 corridor will not have an impact on the Spaghetti Bowl project in any way.

E.D. Gibson said he believes that Storey County has created their own RTC but they don't have enough gas stations in their county for fuel taxes to make much of an impact.

Vice Chairman Lucey mentioned that he had attended a meeting on the Mt. Rose Highway corridor and thanked NDOT for helping to organize that event.

Items 5.1 thru 5.2 PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION & OPERATIONS

5.1 Approve a temporary suspension or reduction of fares on RTC RIDE and RTC ACCESS to remain in effect until service reliability is restored (*For Possible Action*)

David Jickling, RTC Director of Public Transportation and Operations, addressed the Board and provided background on recent service issues with the RIDE service. He said that there have been issues nation-wide with hiring and retaining coach operators. The good economy has a direct effect because the number of people willing to take this type of job has been reduced.

MV Transit increased wages, some as much as 30%, but there is still a problem with drivers calling in sick, taking vacations, etc., which caused about 20% of all scheduled service to not be made due to the lack of drivers.

Customers are definitely complaining, especially those who rely on the system for school, work, medical appointments, etc. He added that the good news is that by January, MV should have the necessary workforce to run the system effectively.

Mr. Jickling then said he hoped the Board would consider giving the RTC's loyal customers some sort of financial relief to thank them for hanging in there. He explained that the Board has the authority to offer free or reduced fares if one of those is the choice.

Commissioner Jardon said that her concern is that if free fares are given, how does the RTC go back to charging full fares.

Mr. Jickling said that marketing and promotion about why it is being done would be important.

Commissioner Jardon feels that making the RIDE system more appealing to a broader audience would be effective and help out financially.

Mr. Jickling explained that it is actually easier to go with a free fare than a reduced fare due to technological challenges with a reduction. He added that the RTC has withheld approximately \$150,000 in payments to MV for the service they have not provided. A free fare would cause about a \$400,000 revenue hit per month.

E.D. Gibson agreed that if a free fare is offered it may become expected. However, he compares it to airlines where if there is a problem with your flight, vouchers are often given. He then suggested offering a free Friday as an option because passengers have experienced some serious consequences, such as missing a college final as happened to one of the passengers.

Vice Chairman Lucey has had the phone calls from passengers as well and believes something must be done for RTC's passengers. He added that this also affects tourism so he supports suspending the fare through January and then figuring out a way to bring passengers back to the system.

Commissioner Hartung said that until reliability is back up, ridership will not increase. He is not for suspending fares but would rather hand out passes as needed, use a different contractor to run the system, etc.

Vice Chairman Lucey expressed concern that Commissioner Hartung was getting off of the agenda topic.

E.D. Gibson said that the challenges being faced are directly related to the economy and the labor market, not a reflection of the capacity of MV Transportation.

Commissioner Dahir asked what happens if passengers come for a free ride but the buses are not showing up, how will things improve.

Mr. Jickling is optimistic that, based on trends, the system will be just about back to normal toward the end of January.

Commissioner Dahir then asked if the RTC could provide staffing to go to the stops when we know a bus is not going to arrive. Basically, what can be done to provide the best that can be done for the passengers.

Commissioner Jardon agrees that the ridership program should be corrected and some sort of free Friday could be offered if it is tied to something other than missing buses.

Commissioner Delgado asked what the starting wage is for drivers and what are their usual schedules.

Mr. Jickling said starting wage is \$17/hr and he would like to discuss their schedules outside of this meeting as it gets complicated with labor unions, seniority, etc.

Vice Chairman Lucey was again concerned that conversation was getting off topic and he would like to keep the discussion strictly to fares and what the commissioners want to do with regard to a temporary suspension or reduction of fares.

Mr. Jickling added for the record that in the RTC's policy on transit, the RTC Executive Director also has the authority to make this decision if necessary.

Vice Chairman Lucey asked how passengers can be notified when a bus is going to be late or cancelled.

Mr. Jickling said that the RTC currently uses a system called Nextbus which will tell passengers when the next bus is coming, if at all, but it does not tell them why it is not coming. He added that MV Transportation knows when a route will not run because the drivers bid on the work, so they could potentially send out some kind of notification in advance or have the RTC send something out.

Commissioner Hartung suggested that a transit pass be given to passengers when they download the Nextbus app as an incentive to use it.

E.D. Gibson then suggested as an option that when staff finds out that a route will not be running, the next day that route could be free. He also suggested holding a workshop about the transit system.

Commissioner Hartung asked how a free ride day benefits the person who already paid for a 30-day pass. He does not support the presented options.

Vice Chair Lucey then asked for a motion.

Commissioner Dahir made a motion to not approve a suspension or reduction of fares but would like to give the discretion to the Executive Director, the motion was seconded by Commissioner Hartung.

On further discussion, Commissioner Jardon wanted to make it clear that this does not mean that nothing will ever be given, only that this specific agenda item was not stylized for any other options. She also asked if there is any way to simply add a day digitally to someone's pass if their route did not show up.

Mr. Jickling said at this time there is no way to do that digitally.

Commissioner Hartung said he was not pleased that this item did not allow other options for consideration.

RTC Chief Legal Counsel Dale Ferguson responded that often, he will request very narrow, specific agenda wording, such as in this case.

E.D. Gibson said that any decisions that are made will be reported to the commissioners.

Upon a vote, the motion passed unanimously.

5.2 Authorize the Executive Director to negotiate a funding agreement between the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC), the City of Reno (City), and, if necessary, the "Downtown Reno Business Improvement District," a private Nevada nonprofit corporation, in an amount not to exceed \$140,000 per year for three years, for transit related purposes, including ambassador services, cleaning/maintenance services, enhanced police services, and other special services within a newly created business district located in the vicinity of downtown Reno (*For Possible Action*)

Commissioner Jardon disclosed that she has been appointed by the City of Reno to serve as the elected representative to the board of the Downtown Reno Business Improvement District. She has no interests that could reasonably affect her ability to vote on this item, but in an excess of caution, she wanted to put this disclosure on the public record.

Vice Chairman Lucey disclosed that he has been appointed by Washoe County to serve as the elected representative to the board of the Downtown Reno Business Improvement District. He has no interests that could reasonably affect her ability to vote on this item, but in an excess of caution, he wanted to put this disclosure on the public record.

E.D. Gibson said in the past, RTC's 4th Street Station had the honor of being the police stations number one call-to location. Not an honor to be proud of, so in an effort to make the area safer, cleaner and more appealing, he would like to partner with Downtown Reno Business Improvement

District to get an ambassadorship program in place with the focus on running a safe, efficient transit system.

Vice Chairman Lucey said he and Commissioner Jardon had been actively involved in this plan to address the needs of the downtown area, such as the homeless issues. He believes the City of Sparks will also want to implement something similar as their community grows.

Commissioner Hartung confirmed that the total amount is about \$150,000 if the \$10,000 increment is included. He then asked if the Board could approve the budgeted amount for future years of if that would be incumbent on future boards.

Mr. Ferguson said that it would most likely be a part of the approval process for future budgets as is the norm.

E.D. Gibson said those should be considered as option years. He then introduced Mr. Alex Stettinski, Executive Director of the Downtown Reno Business Improvement District (BID), who gave a presentation on the program and offered to answer questions. (Presentation is available by contacting dthompson@rtcwashoe.com)

Commissioner Dahir requested specific metrics brought to future updates on where funding is being spent. He also asked for a better description of what the color coded map presented represents. Commissioner Dahir spoke on behalf of Chairman Ron Smith who said they are very supportive of the region and when it comes time for the City of Sparks to participate, everyone has good institutional knowledge of what may happen at today's meeting. The Commissioner also thinks ambassadors could help out by potentially handing out passes to disgruntled passengers.

Mr. Stettinski agreed and added that the plan is for the ambassador program to grow and to assign them to specific need areas of the city. He is already seeing improvements just by having them out there to assist.

Commissioner Delgado asked what type of training the ambassadors receive.

Mr. Stettinski said they receive 40 hours of training in the beginning and then additional training as they go along. He also suggested that any of the commissioners speak to the ambassadors so the ambassadors can learn more about available resources and how to respond to certain behaviors. They also receive training on NARCAN use and how to recognize an overdose, etc.

Commissioner Hartung agrees with the comments made and fully supports the region to make downtown a more attractive place. He would like Mr. Stettinski provide an update every six months along with metrics. He would also like Mr. Stettinski to see how Sparks will be included in this program and be given the same consideration.

Mr. Stettinski envisions a satellite office in Sparks with continuous communications between the two cities.

Vice Chairman Lucey, along with Commissioner Jardon, truly believe great benefits will come from this program.

Commissioner Hartung asked how the RTC is justifying this expenditure and making sure we are legal and above board.

Mr. Ferguson and E.D. Gibson both said that the RTC operates under the sales tax statute and what sales tax may be used for, and there were broad services provided in the agreement but the terms of the contract must be in compliance with the sales tax provisions and the statutory obligations of the RTC under Statute 277A, which the sales tax is linked to and provides a funding base from which to operate.

On motion of Commissioner Hartung, seconded by Commissioner Dahir, which motion carried unanimously, Vice Chairman Lucey ordered that the Executive Director be authorized to negotiate a funding agreement between the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC), the City of Reno (City), and, if necessary, the "Downtown Reno Business Improvement District," a private Nevada nonprofit corporation, in an amount not to exceed \$140,000 per year for three years, for transit related purposes, including ambassador services, cleaning/maintenance services, enhanced police services, and other special services within a newly created business district located in the vicinity of downtown Reno and bring the contract back to the Board for review and approval.

Items 6.1 thru 6.3 FINANCE

6.1 Receive a report on the FY 2018 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) for the Regional Transportation Commission of Washoe County (RTC) and authorize staff to submit the document to the Nevada Department of Taxation (*For Possible Action*)

Ms. Stephanie Haddock, RTC Director of Finance and CFO, addressed the Board to give her presentation report on the FY 2018 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) and thanked the commissioners for accommodating her request to move the meeting up in the month. (Presentation is available by contacting dthompson@rtcwashoe.com)

E.D. Gibson thanked Ms. Haddock and her staff for getting the CAFR done ahead of schedule to accommodate the next agenda item.

Commissioner Hartung would like more detailed presentations brought in the future to discuss assets and the ability to maintain them. He would also like to discuss with directors the bonding process and what he understands to be "holes" that could be better used. His main concern is funding the transit system.

Ms. Haddock responded that those in depth discussions will take place during the budget presentation.

Commissioner Jardon supports E.D. Gibson's suggestion to hold a transit workshop in the next few months.

Vice Chairman Lucey agrees and would also like to discuss how this can be brought up to the legislature.

On motion of Commissioner Hartung, seconded by Commissioner Dahir, which motion carried unanimously, Vice Chairman Lucey ordered that staff be authorized to submit the FY 2018 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) for the Regional Transportation Commission of Washoe County (RTC) to the Nevada Department of Taxation.

6.2 Receive a status report on the refunding on RTC's 2009 and 2013 Motor Vehicle Fuel Tax bonds - (No Action Required)

Ms. Stephanie Haddock, RTC Director of Finance and CFO, addressed the Board to provide the current status on the bond refunding as provided in the back-up materials for this agenda item.

She explained that the bonds would be sold December 11th and the transaction closed by December 20th. The Washoe County Commission unanimously passed the bond refunding ordinance at their November 27th meeting. Presentations were given to both Moody's and the S&P and the RTC was upgraded to a AAA3 by Moody and the S&P upgraded the RTC to AA, both of which are both very good and show the RTC as a very highly rated agency. One of the reasons for the great ratings is because the RTC is now at three-times coverage which means revenue sources cover our debt three times over.

Vice Chairman Lucey thanked Ms. Haddock and her staff for their hard work.

Commissioner Hartung also thanked them and added that because of this, a huge savings was brought to the taxpayers. There had been a misconception that taxes had been raised by the RTC when they hadn't.

Ms. Haddock said this will provide taxpayers approximately \$2.4 million in annual debt savings.

No Action was taken on this item.

6.3 Legal Issues - Report, discussion and possible action and/or direction to legal counsel and staff following receipt of information on legal issues. The RTC may, consistent with Chapter 241 of NRS, decide to interrupt the public meeting at any time to conduct a closed session to confer with legal counsel and possibly deliberate on legal issues. Any action on pending legal matters will be made when the public meeting is reconvened.

Legal Counsel Dale Ferguson updated the Board on legal matters pertaining to the Bella Vista Ranch case. He said that trial had concluded two days prior and the judge ordered written closing arguments. A decision should come in springtime.

He also thanked the RTC staff who attended the trial for support.

Item 7 PUBLIC INPUT

Vice Chairman Lucey opened the meeting to public input and called on anyone wishing to speak on topics relevant to the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) that are not included in the current agenda.

There being no one wishing to speak, the Chair closed public input.

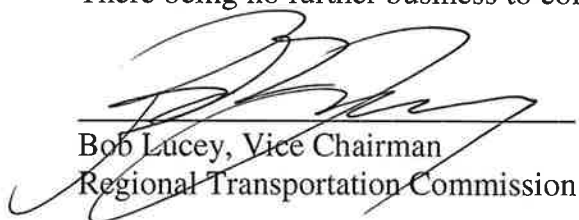
Item 8 MEMBER ITEMS

Commissioner Jardon would like the Executive Director facilitate a workshop on transit toward the beginning of the new year.

Vice Chairman Lucey would also like to see something on how to address the transit issues at the next legislative session.

Item 9 ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 11:34 a.m.



Bob Lucey, Vice Chairman
Regional Transportation Commission