

**REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
WASHOE COUNTY, NEVADA**

FRIDAY

9:03 A.M.

March 18, 2022

PRESENT:

**Neoma Jardon, Reno City Council Member, Chair
Ed Lawson, Mayor of Sparks, Vice Chair
Vaughn Hartung, Washoe County Commissioner
Bob Lucey, Washoe County Commissioner**

**Bill Thomas, RTC Executive Director
Adam Spear, Legal Counsel
Darin Tedford, Deputy Director of NDOT (Alternate)**

NOT PRESENT:

**Oscar Delgado, Reno City Council Member
Kristina Swallow, Director of NDOT**

The regular monthly meeting, held in the Chambers of the Washoe County Commission, 1001 E. 9th Street, Reno, Nevada, was called to order by Chair Jardon. Following the roll call and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of our country, the Board conducted the following business:

Items 1.3 thru 1.4 SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS

1.4 Remembrance of Michael Moreno – *taken out of order*

Michael Moreno was with the RTC for many, many years and after battling an illness for a time, his life was taken from this world January 25th. In honor of his memory and the many wonderful ways he impacted everyone, both personally and in business, the City of Reno made a proclamation declaring January 25, 2022, as Michael Moreno Day. Chair Jardon read the proclamation and gave it to Michael's family, who was in attendance. Additionally, the City of Reno gave the family a street sign reading Moreno Way.

The City of Sparks also made a proclamation declaring March 18, 2022, as Michael Moreno Day and it was then presented to the family.

Michael's personal friend and business associate, Anja Graves, requested that Senator Catherine Cortez Masto have a flag flown over the United States Capital in Washington, DC in Michael's honor. The flag was flown February 2nd and was then sent to Reno and given to Michael's family during this remembrance.

Members of the audience were then invited to say a few words if they chose to, and several people from the community told stories and spoke about their fond memories of Michael.

1.3 Driver Recognition – *taken out of order*

Executive Director (E.D.) Bill Thomas announced that this day was National Driver Appreciation Day and said that both of the RTC’s contractors, Keolis and MTM, had planned events throughout the day to celebrate their drivers.

He then introduced Yolanda Cobb, an RTC ACCESS driver with MTM and said Yolanda was hired in 1988 and is considered a “pioneer” in ADA transit in our community. Many things have changed since then, with the exception of Yolanda’s safe driving record of 34 years, and her love and passion for RTC ACCESS clients.

Among her numerous awards, former Senator Harry Reid bestowed Yolanda with a service award for her outstanding work in the community on her 20th anniversary. Yolanda was also named the national *Katherine McClary Operator of the Year* award winner. This award was established to honor the memory of Katherine McClary, who was tragically killed in a bus crash in 2004. The award recognizes the safest transit operators.

E.D. Thomas then thanked Yolanda for the incredible work she does for this community.

Next, E.D. Thomas introduced Jeff Ramociotti, an RTC RIDE coach operator with Keolis N.A. Jeff is a Reno native who has served the Washoe County community by providing transportation for more than 13 years. His transportation career began in 2009, transporting students safely to and from school for the Washoe County School District. He then accepted a position with Keolis in 2020.

Jeff exudes contagious enthusiasm and has deep insight into transportation. The customers he transports on RTC RIDE are always cared for with skill and compassion. He is a pillar of the community and takes pride in working for Keolis and has aspirations to become a supervisor. He is a dedicated driver and valued person. His coworkers and supervisors say he is a pleasure to work with and a great asset to Keolis and our community.

E.D. Thomas then thanked Jeff for his great work.

Item 2 PUBLIC INPUT

Chair Jardon 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.

Ms. Amanda Nelson, Keolis coach operator, reminded the Board of a discussion that took place about a panel of drivers meeting with members of the Board on occasion and thinks it would still be beneficial to hold those discussions.

Mr. Jeff Church, local resident, requested that the next board item pertaining to the gas tax be worded in such a manner that the Board can ask the County Commission to cap the tax. He would also like the RTC to invest their time and work with UNR to look into using light rail in the region.

Mr. Chris Fuqua, Vice President of Teamsters, Local 533, addressed the Board to thank them for the increased payment of \$6.76 per service hour for Keolis coach operators. He then mentioned that the union contract with the paratransit contractor MTM is up June 30, 2022. He is hopeful the drivers will be provided with a livable wage and better health benefits, etc.

Mr. Gary Watson, President of Teamsters, Local 533, addressed the Board to say that if the RTC truly appreciates the transit employees, they should invest in them. He believes the drivers deserve better than what they have received and that there were 40 labor violations settled with Keolis. He would like E.D. Thomas and the agency to denounce Keolis.

Mr. Carlos Elizondo, local resident, has a concern about the changes in the Virginia line because the buses are running bumper to bumper and he doesn't see the point of that. Additionally, many of the buses you see downtown say Out of Service.

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

Item 3 APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

Items 4.1 thru 4.20 CONSENT ITEMS

Minutes

- 4.1 Approve Minutes of the February 18, 2022 meeting (*For Possible Action*)**
- 4.2 Approve Minutes of the January 21, 2022 meeting and workshop (*For Possible Action*)**
- 4.3 Approve Minutes of the January 14, 2022 special meeting (*For Possible Action*)**

Reports

- 4.4 Acknowledge receipt of the monthly Planning Activity Report (*For Possible Action*)**
- 4.5 Acknowledge receipt of the monthly Engineering Activity Report (*For Possible Action*)**
- 4.6 Acknowledge receipt of the monthly Public Transportation/Operations Activity Report (*For Possible Action*)**
- 4.7 Acknowledge receipt of the monthly Procurement Activity Report (*For Possible Action*)**
- 4.8 Acknowledge receipt of the monthly Summary Report for the Technical, Citizens Multimodal, and Regional Road Impact Fee Advisory Committees (*For Possible Action*)**

Engineering Department

- 4.9 Approve a contract with Nichols Consulting Engineers, CHTD, to provide design services and optional engineering during construction for the First Street Rehabilitation project from Sierra Street to Virginia Street in an amount not-to-exceed \$197,302 *(For Possible Action)*
- 4.10 Approve a contract with Jacobs Engineering Group, Inc., to provide engineering and survey services for the Oddie/Wells Corridor Project in an amount not-to-exceed \$298,270 *(For Possible Action)*
- 4.11 Approve Amendment No. 2 to the contract with Nichols Consulting Engineers, CHTD, for design and engineering during construction services for the Reno Consolidated 20-01 - Mayberry Drive, California Avenue and First Street project in the amount of \$61,159, for a new total not-to-exceed amount of \$1,134,054 *(For Possible Action)*
- 4.12 Approve Amendment No. 3 to the contract with Atkins North America, Inc., to perform additional design services and engineering during construction services for the Sky Vista Parkway Rehabilitation and Widening project in the amount of \$515,714, for a new total not-to-exceed amount of \$2,460,173 *(For Possible Action)*
- 4.13 Approve the qualified list of consultants to provide civil engineering, design, and construction management services for the Traffic Engineering Program and the Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) Program *(For Possible Action)*
- 4.14 Approve an Interlocal Cooperative Agreement (ICA) with the Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT) to outline responsibilities for both NDOT and RTC to coordinate and manage tasks during construction of the roundabout on 4th Street (SR 647) defined as TE Spot 10 – South Project *(For Possible Action)*
- 4.15 Approve an Interlocal Cooperative Agreement (ICA) with Washoe County for RTC to fund the design and installation of culvert grates at the equalization culvert along Veteran’s Parkway north of Clean Water Way, within City of Sparks limits, in an amount not-to-exceed \$30,000 *(For Possible Action)*

Public Transportation/Operations Department

- 4.16 Approve a contract with Krueger Transport, LLC, to provide a consultant study for the Hydrogen Fuel Cell Electric Bus and Infrastructure Deployment project in an amount not-to-exceed \$180,000 *(For Possible Action)*

Executive, Administrative and Finance Departments

- 4.17 Approve a contract with Thompson Coburn, LLP, for specialized legal services *(For Possible Action)*
- 4.18 Authorize the Executive Director to explore options to dispose of six (6) parcels acquired as part of a planned US 395/Clear Acre/Sutro Interchange Improvement Project by sale, exchange or lease to a public agency for a reasonable public use related to affordable housing *(For Possible Action)*
- 4.19 Approve modifications to Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) Management Policy P-21, Travel Policy *(For Possible Action)*

4.20 Approve modifications to Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) Management Policy P-62, Business Expenses (For Possible Action)

On motion of Commissioner Hartung, seconded by Commissioner Lucey, which motion carried unanimously, Chair Jardon ordered that Consent Items 4.1 through 4.20 be approved.

Item 5.1 thru 5.4 DISCUSSION ITEMS AND PRESENTATIONS

5.1 Acknowledge receipt of a report regarding the Lemmon Drive Segment 2 Roadway Alternatives Analysis Report (For Possible Action)

Mr. Dale Keller, RTC Engineering Project Manager, gave a presentation showing the final 3 alignments, out of 12, for the project, along with the pros and cons for each. Alignment 6, the Natural Berm Alignment, was ultimately identified as the preferred alignment.

Commissioner Hartung asked if the existing Lemmon Valley Drive will remain.

Mr. Keller responded that the vision is that the existing roadway would be removed and in final design, a decision would be made on the best way to reconstruct that area.

Commissioner Lucey asked when the project will be shovel ready.

Mr. Keller said it is planned for 2025, which is within the first five-years.

Commissioner Lucey said that is too far out and he would like to see if there is any way to speed that up.

On motion of Commissioner Hartung, seconded by Commissioner Lucey, which motion carried unanimously, Chair Jardon ordered that Consent Items 4.1 through 4.20 be approved.

5.2 Acknowledge receipt of a report regarding a Micro-Mode Regional Traffic Management Strategy (For Possible Action)

E.D. Thomas said there are two goals to address with this project, one is to define RTC's role in the e-bike world and the second goal is to look into the bike/ped and multimodal projects as a whole to provide more clarity.

Ms. Sara Going, RTC Project Manager, gave a presentation showing an alternative manner of looking at different modes of transportation and how to strategically move forward. One of the main themes is to look at the traffic stress (higher traffic volumes) on a given roadway and to then find parallel alternatives with lower traffic stress to place multimodal pathways.

Vice Chair Lawson said that in Sparks, the bicycling lane options are few and not safe, specifically if you'd like to get to the river path or ride to Reno. He would like to see more connectivity to different parts of the region for Sparks.

Commissioner Hartung asked about the bike path on Veterans Memorial Parkway and what the number of recreational bicyclists vs commuter bicyclists is on that roadway, because the bike/ped path is highly used.

Ms. Going said that she would have to bring that information back to a future meeting.

Chair Jardon asked if it's fair to say that RTC has tried to be "all things on roadways to all modes of transportation requested" and now the focus is moving to alternative roads instead of using the commuter high-speed roadways.

Ms. Going said that on the commuter roads, a higher level of separation is required which also comes at a high price.

On motion of Commissioner Lucey, seconded by Vice Chair Lawson, which motion carried unanimously, Chair Jardon ordered that receipt of the report be acknowledged.

5.3 Receive an update on planned efforts to rebuild public transportation through the FY 2023-2027 Transit Optimization Plan Strategies process based on input received at the Board's workshop in January 2022, and provide input and direction regarding next steps (*For Possible Action*)

Taken together with -

5.4 Receive an update on planned efforts to examine RTC's role in transportation decision-making, development, and the future of our community based on input received at the Board's workshop in January 2022, and provide input and direction regarding next steps (*For Possible Action*)

E.D. Thomas said that Items 5.3 and 5.4 came from direction given at the Board Retreat in January 2022 and then handed the conversation to Erica Olsen, consultant from OnStrategy.

Chair Jardon then asked Legal Counsel Adam Spear if it would be okay to take the two items together with one motion.

Mr. Spear said it is at the discretion of the Board.

Ms. Olsen began with Item 5.3 and presented via telephone, saying that the purpose of these two items are to recap the conversation held at the Retreat and more specifically, the item on moving forward with rebuilding public transportation and RTC's regional role in road projects and processes, and engaging the local entities. Today, staff would like to know that they are on the right path.

Ms. Olsen continued with her presentation, saying the specific direction with regard to transit was to:

- 1. Evaluate ongoing ridership and workforce trends** to guide the development of new transit services,

2. Review the **provision of RTC RIDE services to ensure that the vehicle size and vehicle type match the demand for the service,**
3. Support the creation of **additional microtransit services** including areas of poorly performing fixed routes or suburban areas where no transit service exists,
4. **Leverage technology** to improve operational efficiency and effectiveness which improving the customer experience by having a single application for both trip planning and payment,

E.D. Thomas said that RTC had hired a consultant to help put together the Transit Optimization Plan Strategies (TOPS) plan and will bring back a couple of options for the Board to consider. Right now, the focus is on the customer experience and how best to meet the needs of the service and equitability of resources. Staff would also like to establish objective metrics for the outcomes.

Commissioner Lucey said he believes staff is moving in the right direction, but wants to make sure that when we say customers it should be a consideration of all the citizens in the region who may potentially be future customers. It also needs to be as functional and cost effective as possible.

Vice Chair Lawson said it is important to know how many riders we have today and how they use the service in order to make changes.

Commissioner Hartung would like to see an audit of ridership by route to determine where to place future transit and the type of transit to provide.

Chair Jardon thinks that the analysis on ridership trends will provide more options on what the needs are in the region.

Ms. Olsen then continued with Item 5.4 on RTC's role in the development and the future of the community. The direction given by the Board was not as defined as with the previous item:

Address development impacts on transportation differently. Today's approach & tools do not seem adequate.

Outcome: Evaluate the landscape of transportation decision making across our region & look at how to realign this to better to serve the needs of the community.

1. **New and Expanded Roads:** How can we take a more regional view to development? Can we collaborate better? And can RTC play a bigger role to help proactively think about transportation impacts?
2. **Current System:** Who owns what and who needs to maintain what?

E.D. Thomas said that these two areas are new and expanded roads and local roads. This is a complex problem that cannot be solved on our own, so the recommendation is to work with NDOT and the three local governments and figure out how to be facilitative and problem solvers so that the local governments retain the decision making on the development of the region. There are some ideas in the works, but it is too soon to discuss them.

Local roads are owned by the three government entities and NDOT, the RTC does not own the roads. A decision needs to be made on who actually owns the roads going forward and to figure out which entity or agency would be the best to lead in this effort.

Chair Jardon asked, as an example, that Verdi's project allocations are out and then they are done, they are capped with no additional development. Is it then up to the city or the developers to create the infrastructure for these new developments?

E.D. Thomas responded, saying that when considering the example of Verdi, it would be an intentional conversation with the City of Reno, NDOT, RTC and Washoe County to determine who will do what in the long-term.

Commissioner Hartung asked what the triggers are for those conversations. There may be multiple developers with different sized projects, and we don't look at the cumulative effect of those projects.

Chair Jardon said this is where SADs may play a role and an aggressive discussion needs to be held on their use.

On motion of Commissioner Lucey, seconded by Commissioner Hartung, which motion carried unanimously, Chair Jardon ordered that receipt of the updates for Items 5.2 and 5.3 be accepted with the direction provided.

Items 6.1 thru 6.3 REPORTS

6.1 RTC Executive Director Report

Executive Director Thomas spoke about the following matters:

1. He congratulated the following employees for their milestone service anniversaries:
 - Jenna Boga, Paratransit Eligibility and Mobility Specialist with 5 years of service on February 13.
 - Brian Stewart, Director of Engineering, with 5 years of service on April 10.
 - Nicole Coats, Graphic Designer, with 5 years of service on April 24.
2. Today is National Transit Driver Appreciation Day! The RTC recognizes and appreciates the work our contracted transit drivers do for our community. To honor these hardworking employees, the RTC sponsored donuts, coffee and juice this morning. Both Keolis and MTM are also planned recognition events throughout the day. He personally took the opportunity to say "thank you" to these drivers who do such important work for the people in our neighborhoods.
3. Thursday marked the RTC's nineteenth annual St. Patrick's Day FREE Safe RIDE event to provide free transit on all RTC services from 4 p.m. – 2 a.m. This important annual event helps people in our community get around safely while out celebrating this holiday. This event also supports the Vision Zero Truckee Meadow goal of zero pedestrian fatalities in our region by 2030.

4. Washoe County Health District will be providing a “Pop-Up” COVID vaccination clinic at 4th Street Station on Thursday, March 24, from 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM. The clinic will provide free COVID vaccines to people who choose to receive them.
5. At the CDC’s recommendation, TSA will extend the security directive for mask use on public transportation and transportation hubs for one month, through April 18th.

During that time, CDC will work with government agencies to help inform a revised policy framework for when, and under what circumstances, masks should be required in the public transportation corridor. This revised framework will be based on the COVID-19 community levels, risk of new variants, national data, and the latest science. RTC will communicate any updates publicly if and/or when they change.

6.2 RTC Federal Report

Executive Director Thomas mentioned that a written report was provided in the meeting materials and added that

6.3 NDOT Director Report

NDOT Deputy Director Darin Tedford gave the monthly NDOT report containing information on the most recent safety statistics, broken out statewide and Washoe County alone, an update on the most recent AWG meeting activities, an update on the status and purposes for changing the Advanced Signal Warning System (ASWS), and lastly, an update on the Spaghetti Bowl Express project.

Commissioner Hartung read some of his constituent complaints about the change to the flashing yellow lights on Pyramid Hwy. and said they believe the change makes the road less safe, not more safe. Additionally, the speed limit was increased in some areas with no discussion being held with partner agencies. There have also been no capacity improvements on the Pyramid Highway and growth continues.

Chair Jardon talked about a continuously flashing light at a crosswalk in downtown Reno and it was found that those who drove that road on a regular basis tended to eventually ignore the light and it became more dangerous, so the light was removed.

Commissioner Lucey mentioned the same issues on Mount Rose Highways, and the studies, which he calls paralysis through analysis with no solutions. He said that if NDOT is not going to be assertive about making these safety improvements, they should let RTC take care of them.

Chair Jardon said that since she’s been on the City Council in 2012, there have been continuous studies on the North McCarran safety issues, but nothing happened and now more studies need to occur. It’s very frustrating.

Item 7 COMMISSIONER ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPDATES

Commissioner Lucey would like to see some forward progression on the roundabouts on Mt. Rose Highway and he would like staff to begin looking into potential alignments to bring Butch Cassidy up to Thomas Creek Road in conjunction with Washoe County’s safety improvement efforts.

He would also like to see sidewalk improvements at Crystal Bay and would like to work with NDOT on that.

Commissioner Hartung said he continues to get requests for more FlexRIDE further out into Spanish Springs, many of them are for 55+ communities.

Chair Jardon would like RTC to facilitate discussions between the Board and some of the coach operators.

Commissioner Hartung would also like Mr. Spear to bring back information on the legalities of capping the indexed fuel tax and what any limitations may be. It was voter approved and he is concerned that it must be capped by a vote of the people as well.

Item 10 PUBLIC INPUT

Chair Jardon 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 11 ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 11:25 a.m.

NEOMA JARDON, Chair
Regional Transportation Commission