

**REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION  
WASHOE COUNTY, NEVADA**

**FRIDAY**

**10:00 A.M.**

**September 15, 2023**

**PRESENT:**

**Ed Lawson, Mayor of Sparks  
Alexis Hill, Vice Chair, Washoe County Commissioner  
Mariluz Garcia, Washoe County Commissioner**

**Bill Thomas, RTC Executive Director  
Adam Spear, Legal Counsel  
Tracy Larkin Thomason, Director of NDOT**

**ABSENT:**

**Hillary Schieve, Mayor of Reno  
Devon Reese, Reno City Vice Mayor**

The regular monthly meeting, held in the 1<sup>st</sup> Floor Great Room at Regional Transportation Commission of Washoe County, Reno, Nevada, was called to order by Chair Lawson. The Board conducted the following business:

***Item 1           CALL TO ORDER***

- 1.1   Roll Call
- 1.2   Pledge of Allegiance

***Item 2           PUBLIC INPUT***

Chair Lawson 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.

Amanda Nelson, Transit Operator with Keolis, I spoke about offering free rides instead of charging people at last months meeting. I had a few other ideas to share. Instead of doing free rides for all, possibly we could work with the lower income families and get them bus passes. A lot of families are really struggling and they need to get to their jobs and appointments. I would also like to see the seats in the buses be exchanged for plastic seats, rather than fabric. They can get extremely dirty and plastic seats can be cleaned much more thoroughly and sanitized than fabric.

Laurie Rodriguez, local resident, I've been coming to these meetings for over eight years now and in that time the disabled community have been consistently coming to inform me of issues that they face. The problem is they are confined to three minutes. There are a number of times I see people cut off sometimes rudely, as they cannot physically see the clock. I would like to propose that this Board create a permanent spot on the agenda for our disabled community. Of course, there would have to be guidelines, as they are for all agenda items. It would give the disabled community that depends entirely on public transportation a chance for discussion, and a chance for them to ask and respond to questions, and for all of you to ask and respond to questions. This Board has repeatedly said you want to be different from all of the past boards. I think this would be a great opportunity for our Board to be one of the few in the Country, if not the first, to have a dedicated agenda item for the disabled community. I would like to see this Board be brave enough to make that first step to start moving forward with change.

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

**Item 3        *APPROVAL OF AGENDA***

On motion of Vice Chair Hill to move to approve agenda, seconded by Commissioner Garcia, which motion unanimously carried, Chair Lawson ordered that the agenda for this meeting be approved.

**Items 4        *CONSENT ITEMS***

**4.1     *Minutes***

4.1.1    Approve minutes from 8/18/2023 Board meeting. (For Possible Action)

**4.2.     *Reports***

4.2.1    Acknowledge receipt of the monthly Procurement Activity Report. (For Possible Action)

4.2.2    Acknowledge receipt of the Summary Report for the Technical, Citizens Multimodal, and Regional Road Impact Fee Advisory Committees. (For Possible Action)

4.2.3    Acknowledge receipt of the monthly Planning Activity Report. (For Possible Action)

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

4.2.5    Acknowledge receipt of the monthly Public Transportation and Operations Activity Report. (For Possible Action)

4.2.6    Acknowledge receipt of the monthly Outreach Report from the Communications staff. (For Possible Action)

**4.3     *Planning Department***

4.3.1    Approve a contract with Caliper Corporation for consulting services on the RTC Travel Demand Model Development Project, in an amount not-to-exceed \$499,890. (For Possible Action)

4.3.2    Approve a contract with ETC Institute for consulting services on the Regional Travel Characteristics Study, in an amount not-to-exceed \$699,130.15. (For Possible Action)

**4.4     *Engineering Department***

4.4.1    Approve a contract with Atkins North America, Inc., for design and engineering during construction services related to the Pyramid Highway Operations Improvements Project, in an amount not-to-exceed \$686,480. (For Possible Action)

4.4.2    Approve a contract with Lumos and Associates, Inc., for design and engineering during construction services related to the 2024 Preventive Maintenance Project, in an amount not-to-exceed \$957,440. (For Possible Action)

4.4.3    Approve an Interlocal Cooperative Agreement with the Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT) for construction of new conduit and fiber optics on Pyramid Way between C Street and Tyler Way as a part of the SR445 Pyramid 3R and ADA Pavement Project, in the amount of \$200,000. (For Possible Action)

4.4.4    Approve a contract with Parametrix, Inc., for professional engineering services for 60% level design of the Pyramid Highway and Sparks Boulevard/Highland Ranch Interchange and preliminary design of the Disc Drive Extension (part of the U.S. 395 Connector) from Pyramid Highway to US 395, in an amount not-to-exceed \$4,913,723.98. (For Possible Action)

4.4.5    Approve a Resolution of Condemnation authorizing RTC's legal counsel to commence condemnation proceedings to acquire one (1) fee simple acquisition, one (1) public utility easement, and one (1) temporary construction easement on Assessor Parcel

Numbers 140-870-03 and 140-870-09 from Esplanade at Damonte Ranch Homeowners Association, which are necessary to construct the Steamboat Parkway Improvement project. (For Possible Action)

#### **4.5 Public Transportation/Operations Department**

- 4.5.1 Approve a contract with RO Truck & Equipment, LLC, for the purchase of ten (10) Ram ProMaster FlexRIDE/ACCESS vehicles utilizing the State of Nevada Master Agreement # 99SWC-S1495, in an amount not-to-exceed \$1,492,575. (For Possible Action)

On motion of Commissioner Garcia to move to approve consent items, seconded by Vice Chair Hill, which motion unanimously carried, Chair Lawson ordered that the consent items for this meeting be approved.

#### ***Item 5 DISCUSSION ITEMS AND PRESENTATIONS***

- 5.1. Approve a new “Statement of Purpose and Procedures” for the Citizen Multimodal Advisory Committee (CMAC). (For Possible Action)

Dan Doenges, RTC Director of Planning. We have an item before you today to approve a revised “Statement of Purpose and Procedures” for the Citizen Multimodal Advisory Committee (CMAC). This is in response to a requirement of recent legislation with AB214, which passed this last legislative session and requires RTC to create an Advisory Committee to provide information concerning construction insulation, maintenance of benches, shelters and transit stops. The Committee must include at least two members who are employees of companies that RTC contracts with to operate the public transit system, so this would be for our RIDE and ACCESS services.

Rather than create an entirely new committee, it was decided internally that we would incorporate these new members into our existing CMAC. We would have those employees, that will be recommended by our contractors Keolis and MTM, become part of the CMAC. In these committees, each member would serve a one-year term. Currently, our CMAC members serve up to three years, so we are proposing a revision to the procedures that would make it an even playing field for everyone to do a one-year term and they could serve up to six-years at their discretion.

Staff is recommending to incorporate the duties of this required Committee through AB214 into our existing CMAC, and there will be a separate future action to appoint those two new committee members to satisfy those requirements.

Chair Lawson brought up the concern of committee members terms ending at the same time, every six-years, and the need for staggering terms. Somehow, we have to figure out how to stagger them, because if you don’t have the walking around knowledge on the committee, you’re completely starting over and I don’t see how that would work.

Adam Spear, RTC General Counsel, I believe the idea would be that the people would be able to be reappointed for three, 1-year terms, so there will be staggering that way, but AB214 specifies that the terms of members of the committee have to be one-year.

The legislation does specify that you can combine the duties of this committee with an existing committee, with the idea of it being more efficient and effective from an administrative service stand point. There are some things I think we can do practically to address this issue to try to minimize those

types of impacts, but the procedures are lined up with the Legislation. There are no term limits, but we've said up to six-years to keep consistency with our practice on the committee.

Chair Lawson, in the interim we'll do what the law says, but we need to change it. I can see it happening where we have 15 new members, and I'm the only one standing with knowledge of the committee, so I control the committee now, and that's not the way it should work.

Commissioner Garcia, are there any bylaws or anything written currently for this particular committee that would address succession and be a little more proactive and preventative from that happening?

Dan Doenges, we do have some existing bylaws for the current committee as it is structured today. I apologize if they weren't included in your packet, but they are on our RTC website. Every member gets a copy of that when they start. What is included in your packet today is the reformatted structure.

Vice Chair Hill, that is a great idea Commissioner Garcia, because I think I've seen other committees build staggering terms into the bylaws, so perhaps we can add that for the consideration. Approve this today and then have you bring it back to us in October for that change?

Adam Spear, our ability to do that would be limited given the legislation that was adopted. It's pretty prescriptive in terms of the one-year terms, but I think we might be able to bring back some practical approaches outside of what's included in these rules and procedures that would address the concerns of the Board.

Chair Lawson, we need more clarification on how much leeway we have to continue the staggering, which is what makes it all work.

On motion of Commissioner Garcia to table Item 5.1 to the next meeting, seconded by Vice Chair Hill, which motion unanimously carried, Chair Lawson ordered that Item 5.1 be moved to the October Board meeting.

## ***Item 6           REPORTS (Informational Only)***

### **6.1     RTC Executive Director Report**

1. I'm very proud that our engineering team received the Engineering News-Record Southwest Award of Merit.
  - This award is for the Diverging Diamond Interchange that was part of the Lemmon Drive Phase 1 Project. A panel of judges reviewed around 80 entries in a variety of categories. They looked at factors like safety, innovation, craft quality, and benefit to the community and industry. You might recall, this project also won the American Society of Engineers' Project of the year for northern Nevada in 2022.
2. On Saturday, we implemented our latest transit service changes.
  - We made improvements on eight routes and the Regional Connector based on our TOPS recommendations. Those include adjusted segment run-times, removal of time-points, additional buses and trips, increased headways, and changed routing. We know these changes will take some getting used to but we hope they will like the improvements in the long-run. We will gradually implement more changes over the next four years.
3. RTC published its updated Program Management Plan for public comment, earlier this week.
  - The plan reflects a change for our federal Section 5310 funding used to improve mobility for seniors and individuals with disabilities. Once approved, the RTC will retain this funding and replace it with local tax dollars. This will give more flexibility to our

subrecipients to better-suit their needs without the strict federal guidelines. Currently, Access to Healthcare Network, Neighbor Network of Northern Nevada, UNR's Senior Outreach Services Program, and Volunteers of America are supported by this funding.

4. Last week, we held a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the Holcomb Avenue Rehabilitation Project.
  - Staff from the RTC, City of Reno, Granite Construction, and Wood Rodgers were on-hand. This project is a model of our Pavement Preservation Program.
  - It helps the pavement last longer and also allowed us to make some important safety, multimodal, and ADA improvements. We're planning another one for the 4<sup>th</sup> and Woodland Roundabout, early next month.
5. Please join me in wishing three of our colleagues the best as they retire – Heinz Schoner, Sharon Britt and Michael Dulude.
  - Heinz is calling it a career at RTC after more than 28 years. He is our Maintenance Specialist and his last day is October 12<sup>th</sup>.
  - Sharon is our Senior Financial Analyst. She has been a vital part of our agency for 22 years. Her last day at RTC was yesterday.
  - Michael is retiring after almost nine years here at RTC. He's been our Senior Technical Transit Operations Planner. His last day at RTC was also yesterday.
6. We will also be saying goodbye to a valued member of our leadership team at the end of the month.
  - Dan Doenges is resigning to go to work with Parametrix. Dan has been with the RTC since 2016 – the last two years as the Director of Planning He has led the charge on many corridor studies and other special studies – and the development of the RTIP. His last day is September 29.
  - Congratulations to Christian Schonlau and his wife, Jenna. They welcomed their son, Hunter, into the world Monday morning. Hunter was born weighing eight pounds, two ounces – and 21-and-a-quarter inches long. Christians says everyone is happy and healthy. Hunter is their second child, joining big brother Blake.
7. Congratulations to the Keolis Driver of the month – Gonzalo “Pepp” Monteleon.
  - Pepp has worked as a bus operator for RTC RIDE since May of 1999. He's also a shop steward for the Teamsters Local 533. Pepp's on-time performance was 95 percent with zero accidents in August. He provides excellent customer service and hasn't had a customer complaint in more than two years. On his free time, Pepp enjoys riding his bicycle, watching sports, and traveling to Las Vegas.
8. Congratulations to Bernabe Marquez as the MTM Employee of the Month.
  - Bernabe has been part of the MTM Transit team for more than a year. His passengers give him many compliments. He likes meeting people and being out-and-about, so this job is a great fit for him. He's very active in the company's safety program – so he's always looking for ways to improve. Outside of work, he enjoys gardening and “Do it yourself” projects. He has two children – one is in medical school and the other is an engineer.

## **6.2 RTC Federal Report**

Paul Nelson, RTC Government Affairs Officer. Senator Catherine Cortez Masto was sponsoring a bill in the Senate that would provide more funding for transit hubs and airports to crack down on human trafficking. These are places where victims often have a chance to seek help, so a key part of this bill would be to provide funding to really focus on prevention and awareness amongst staff. We're also looking at different Outreach opportunities that we can participate in. We are asking the Senator to support the Transit Emergency Relief Act, and that would provide transit agencies with funding faster in the case of natural disasters.

Congress is back in session from their August recess and they have until September 30<sup>th</sup> to either come up with an agreement on the 12 spending bills, or provide a continuing resolution, otherwise they will face government shutdown. The odds of a shutdown appear to be higher this year, because of a few things. There is a slim majority of Republicans in the House, the Speaker is vulnerable and the influence of Far-Right Republicans using the shutdown as leverage for budget limits and culture issues.

The Senate THUD bill would provide about \$2.5 billion for Capital Investments Grants and that's about one-quarter of a million dollars more than the current fiscal year. It includes continued funding for grants for highways and bridges. The bill would also streamline property acquisitions for things like bus facilities, by aligning FTA and FHWA rules. It also encourages the FTA to work with agencies when it comes to cost adjustments on some of their project impacts.

In the House is a bill, Transit Formula Funds to match the IIJA reauthorization levels of almost \$14 billion. The good news is agencies would be less likely to lose any Formula Funding, but the bad news is the bill would impose cuts to transportation discretionary funding. There is a lot of politics that are at play here, so it's kind of a wait and see to see what the two sides come up with.

### **6.3 NDOT Director Report**

NDOT Director Tracy Larkin Thomason, gave a presentation and spoke on the following topics:

- Mike Fuess, our District Engineer, is temporarily away from the position, and I wanted to say in his place as Acting District Engineer is Bhupinder Sandhu, more commonly known as Bhu.
- Presidential Visit and Traffic Control Efforts. When President Biden came to town a couple weeks ago, there were four trips basically from the airport up to South Lake Tahoe. It takes about 75 vehicles and volunteers to cut off as physical barriers for the motorcade and it took 150 hours of planning and 1700 of NDOT time. So, every time they come, there is a lot of behind the scenes impact. We do track it, but I will say we do not get reimbursed.
- New Mt. Rose Highway Avalanche Control Center
- Pyramid Highway Widening Project Update
- Southern Connector Feasibility Study (Out to TRIC), coming from the South Meadows area that will take about 18-24 months to do the study, but we're looking at three different alignments that have been proposed.
- U.S. 50 – Lake Tahoe Public Survey
- Honoring five Officers and First Responders who have died during duty on our highways. We are honoring them with signs that were put up recently and it was kind of fitting that we honored them on 9/11 earlier this week.

Upon conclusion of Director Larkin Thomason's report, Chair Lawson asked if the Commissioners had any questions.

### ***Item 7 COMMISSIONER ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPDATES***

Vice Chair Hill spoke about Ms. Nelson's concerns during public comments. Does the CMAC look at our voucher program as well, is that one of their assignments that they bring to this Board, or is that initiated by the RTC?

Dan Doenges, that is not something we generally bring to the Board. Under this new structure I would imagine that could be included as part of something for them to look at. Both our CMAC and our Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) review a lot of items that are presented to this Board in advance to give any direction or recommendations.

Vice Chair Hill, perhaps that is something that they can do and then we can present on the current program and thoughts they have for this Board to consider. I think those are valid concerns that were brought to us.

At a Board meeting earlier this week, there were accusations that RTC is committing less funding and is running fewer buses, and I think this Board knows that is not true. If the Director could send that information, I would like a quick snapshot of what we've been doing for Public Transit over the years, so I can share that with the community. I don't know if other Board members want to see that, but it would be very helpful for me.

***Item 8 PUBLIC INPUT***

Chair Lawson 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, Chair Lawson closed public input.

***Item 9 ADJOURNMENT***

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 10:34 a.m.



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ED LAWSON, Chair  
Regional Transportation Commission

**\*\*Copies of all presentations are available by contacting Michelle Kraus at [mkraus@rtcwashoe.com](mailto:mkraus@rtcwashoe.com).**