**NATA Board Meeting Minutes**

**June 24, 2021**

**7:30-9:00am**

**Zoom Virtual Meeting**

**NATA Members (who signed in)**

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| **Deb Durand** | ACREP | **Joan Peck** | Longmont Council |
| **Lynn Baca** | Adams County Commission | **Joyce Downing** | Northglenn Council / SCMN |
| **Chris Chovan** | Adams County Staff | **Brook Svoboda** | Northglenn Staff |
| **Brian Staley** | Adams County Staff | **Julie Mullica** | Northglenn Council |
| **Greg Mills** | Brighton Mayor | **Sara Dusenberry** | Northglenn Staff |
| **Guyleen Castriotta** | Broomfield Mayor | **Karen Stuart** | SCMN |
| **Liz Law Evans** | Broomfield Council | **Carson Priest** | SCMN |
| **Brent Soderlin** | Commerce City Staff | **Catherine Sanders** | SCMN |
| **Nicole Frank** | Comm. City Mayor Pro Tem | **Jessica Sandgren** | Thornton Mayor Pro Tem |
| **Todd Fessenden** | Erie Staff | **Kent Moorman** | Thornton Staff |
| **Kevin Ash** | Frederick Staff | **Debra Baskett** | Westminster Staff |
| **Harold Thomas** | Fed. Heights Mayor Pro Tem | **Anita Seitz** | Westminster Mayor  |

**SCMN Members (who signed in)**

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| **Sam Taylor** | Broomfield Chamber | **Carla Perez** | HDR |
| **Mark Shotkoski**  | NW Parkway |  |  |

**Agency Partners (who signed in)**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Julie George** | CDOT | **Chris Quinn** | RTD |
| **Jamie Grim** | CDOT | **Allen Miller** | RTD |
| **Dan Marcucci** | CDOT | **Dave Jensen** | RTD |
| **Ron Papsdorf** | DRCOG | **Vince Buzek** | RTD Board |
| **Debra Johnson** | RTD General Manager | **Troy Whitmore** | RTD Board |
| **Bill Sirois** | RTD | **Erik Davidson**  | RTD Board |
| **Pauletta Tonilas**  | RTD |  |  |

**Guests (who signed in)**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Chris Rock** | Sen. Hickenlooper | **Meghan MacKillop** | CML |

1. **Welcome - Chair Jessica Sandgren**

*Chair Jessica Sandgren welcomed participants, and gave instructions to sign in using the chat function.*

1. **Approval of April 22, 2021 NATA Meeting Minutes:** *Motion to approve minutes was made by Mayor Anita Seitz, seconded by Councilmember Joan Peck and approved unanimously.*
2. **Action to approve Westminster’s Update to NATA Priority Project List:**

This project was brought forward by Westminster for inclusion into the Priority Project List last month. The next opportunity for jurisdictions to add projects to the list will be in September.

*Motion made to approve the Federal Boulevard Multimodal Improvements Project into the NATA Priority Project List made by Councilmember Joyce Downing, seconded by Councilmember Joan Peck and approved unanimously.*

1. **Smart Commute updates: Karen Stuart, Carson Priest, Catherine Sanders**

**Employer Traffic Reduction Program (ETRP) update:** *Catherine Sanders* provided an update regarding the current state of the ETRP rulemaking process and SCMN’s role in that process. SCMN has joined a TMO coalition for official Party Status, enabling the group to influence the rule in a formal way. As a coalition we are advocating for phasing in from largest employers (250+) to smaller employers (100+), counting only trips occurring during ozone commuting hours, tiered SOV rate goals based on employer context, employee training of Employer Transportation Coordinators, and regional equity among different worker types. We are working to contact all employer of 100 or more employees to explain this process and their next steps with an employee commute survey this fall. ETRP will require employers to register as an ETRP eligible employer, administer a commute survey for baseline SOV data and then submit an ETRP plan on 7/1 annually for SOV rate improvement. The draft rule will be heard by the Air Quality Control Commission (AQCC) between August 18-20, and is expected to be adopted at that time. The Air Pollution Control Division (APCD) of the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) is responsible for compliance and implementation of this rule. SCMN has always provided this array of services to employers, and are well set up to help employers through this process.

*Karen* added that the ETRP rule was spawned out of the Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reductions Roadmap that was passed last year by the legislature. This is one component to fight emissions in the front range, with the probability that it will eventually go statewide.

*Mayor Seitz* thanked Catherine and SCMN for their work on the ETRP process. Is there any inclusion of a geographic and/or access to transit equity consideration in the rule?

*Catherine Sanders* said that we ware advocating for tiered SOV rate goals that would recognize those geographic differences across our region, and the very different access to transit. Based on informal conversations between APCD and TMO staff, it sounds like they will be including tiered SOV rates in the rule, but we will see when it’s up for hearing in August if that’s the case.

*Mayor Seitz* asked what compliance would look like if companies aren’t in compliance.

*Catherine Sanders* said that the AQCC is already legally enabled to fine for out of compliance companies, but they are not going to specify what that might look like exactly in the rule. They do have the ability to fine up to $20,000 per day, but that is because they are in charge of overseeing large-level polluters, like Suncor for example. Based on staff conversations, they would like to work with companies on their good-faith efforts well before there are any compliance issues with SOV rates. A given employer will have three years to prepare an ETRP plan and to try to reduce the SOV rate at that worksite, and if they cannot hit those SOV rate goals before the three years then they are technically out of compliance. We are hopeful they are going to be flexible with employers showing a good-faith effort in reducing their SOV rate, even if it isn’t at the ultimate SOV rate goal.

*Karen Stuart* added that SCMN will come back monthly with updates on this rulemaking process, and that we will be available as a resource on this subject.

**Briefing on Transportation legislation (SB260, SB265, HB238):** *Karen Stuart* gave a brief presentation about the three recently passed Senate bills that are focused on transportation. CDOT staff will give a deeper dive on this subject next month. SB260 transforms transportation funding through new fee revenue, instead of through a question to the voters for a tax increase. This is a different approach to the failed Prop 110 effort to raise taxes for transportation projects. This bill aligns environmental planning and coordination with future transportation projects. The fee revenues generated from this bill will provide ongoing stable funding over a period of 10 years. The CDOT portion of the HUTF will bring in $1.28 billion, and the local HUTF allocation will be $947 million. The Bridge and Tunnel Enterprise has added tunnels into their existing bridge enterprise and will receive $522.8 million. The Revitalizing Main Streets program, which has been a successful program during the COVID time will receive $85 million . The newly created Multimodal and Mitigation Fund, which is still being defined, will receive $450 million. Finally, the Public Transit Enterprise will receive $135 million. The two new CDOT enterprises coming out of this bill include the Clean Transit Enterprise which will receive $289 million and the Nonattainment Area Pollution Mitigation Enterprise, which we believe may help fund some ETRP efforts and will receive $184 million. Bill SB265 authorizes the JBC to provide $124 million out of the state budget to a flexible fund that will receive prioritization from the TC and Budget Office. Bill SB238 creates a Front Range Passenger Rail District along the front range. The governance structure of this district uses sales/lodging taxes to fund the rail line. This is much like the RTD FasTracks structure.

**Events schedule:** *Carson Priest* gave a brief update regarding ongoing efforts of SCMN staff to get back out at community events. We attended the Baseline Trail Days event in Broomfield and the Northglenn Full Moon Bike ride, both of which were great events and we are looking forward to attending more events like this all summer long as a part of our Bike to Summer campaign. Please let us know if you know of any events that you think SCMN can or should have a presence at this summer.

1. **RTD Fare Study Input Presentation- Pauletta Tonilas and Bill Sirois**

*Debra Johnson (RTD CEO & GM)* introduced the Fare Study presentation. Thank you for the opportunity to be here to speak on our Fare Study and Equity Analysis process. I have spoken to many of you, and many others, about the idea that our fares are cumbersome and difficult to understand causing a large brush barrier to entry. What we are doing is peeling back the layers of our fare system onion via a Federal Transit Administration guideline led Fare Study and Equity Analysis over the course of the next 18 months. Today we want to engage with our external stakeholders to focus our efforts on the myriad of pain points across the region as we create a scope of work for this study. I want to acknowledge my team for taking this project on with great vigor as we work to create greater access across our system.

*Bill Sirois (RTD)* said our fare structure contributes to the operational cost of our transit system at about 15-20% of our overall operating budget. Fares also match demand to operational capacity. RTD has a hybrid fare system that includes a flat fare (local and limited bus service), zone-based fare (various different fare zones dependent on your location) and a distance-based fare (regional bus service, SkyRide service). So, our fare structure is relatively complex. We have four main zones including the airport exclusive zone. We offer various fare products including a 3-hour pass, a day pass, a monthly pass and an Access-a-Ride trip. We offer the federally mandated 70% off for youth, 50% off for seniors and those with disabilities, and we also offer 40% discount for our LiVE income-based program for those at 185% of the federal poverty level. Our pricing, which I know is a point of contention, includes various fares and the insurance-based pass programs such as EcoPass, Neighborhood EcoPass or CollegePass. We want to analyze all of these things during this study.

*An interactive Mentimeter poll was launched by RTD staff which included the following questions:* About how often have you used RTD in the last 12 months? Have you ever used RTD services of any kind, even if only once? Which of the following describes your attitudes towards RTD’s fare structure (please explain)? What aspects of RTD’s fare structure do you think work well (Please explain)? What aspect of RTD’s fare structure needs the most improvement (Please explain)?

*Bill Sirois* thanked everyone for their participation and said that the next steps in this process include stakeholder input through August with a scope of work and RFP going out in early fall of this year with a consultant selected before the end of the year. The real work will start next year with a targeted wrap up and implementation in Q1 2023.

*Chair Sandgren* asked about how the lack of ticket-checkers on the N-Line trains reflected an accurate ridership number.

*Debra Johnson* said that there are actually automatic passenger counters on the trains and can extrapolate a ridership number for each bus and railcar.

*Councilmember Peck* said that RTD decided to not have gated platform entry when building out the FasTracks system and wonders if the cost of ticket skippers would override the cost savings for having not installed those gates or hiring more ticket checkers.

*Bill Sirois* said that RTD has examined this issue in the past and it needs a significant infrastructural investment to harden stations that wouldn’t outweigh the benefit. In their most recent examination, RTD actually had an extremely low fare evasion rate.

*Debra Johnson* said that when looking at a closed system, we know that we don’t have the right of way or ADA compliance to harden stations in this matter. As electronic ticketing continues to become more prominent, we will have even less fare evasion in the future.

*Karen Stuart* said she knew that there must be some internal frustration at RTD regarding the 18-month timeframe for this study. With the impending ETRP rule coming down, we believe that transit is the absolute best option for reducing SOV rates in metro areas. In the midst of an effort to try to rebuild ridership in a post-pandemic world, the best way to encourage ridership is to simplify the experience for riders. During her time on the previous Pass Program Working Group, it was clear to her that there were elasticity challenges between reduced fares on one end and higher fares on the other. Transit service should be expanded and it should adequately serve the district.

*Bill Sirois* said that when it comes to the time, RTD is trying to reduce the lead time on the crucial survey piece of the study which should shorten the timeframe a bit.

*Mayor Seitz* said that there is a special emphasis on getting things “right” from this study since the timeframe is so lengthily and it runs the risk to become stale.

*Councilmember Mullica* asked if there is a way to minimize the lag in data from study to study?

*Debra Johnson* said that RTD is working on enhancing the Title XI process, creating a more robust equity feedback loop. It should not be like this as they move forward – RTD will have more up-to-date information at their fingertips to implement.

*Bill Sirois* said that there are also travel surveys at various levels that play an important role in this process in keeping our data up to date.

1. **RTD Directors’ Reports: Directors Buzek, Cook, Davidson, Guissinger, Whitmore**

*Director Buzek* thanked the RTD team for their presentation about the fare analysis, and knows that RTD will take the time to get it right. RTD fares are complicated, and he has high hopes for a better system coming out of this process. In District J, he is getting a lot of calls regarding the 122X regional bus service that has been replaced by the 120X.

*Director Whitmore* echoed his hearing of various frustrations about the fare study timeline. He sees a lot of RTD staff members on the call, and appreciates their attendance of this meeting. Directors have their second strategic planning meeting in-person this coming Saturday to hone in their two or three top priorities. He is hearing some issues about N Line operations, so he’s meeting with staff regarding that service delivery.

*Director Davidson* added that he is grateful for staff working through the fare analysis process. He had some friends visit last weekend and had the opportunity to watch them try to understand the fare structure and schedules on the N Line. RTD had a state audit conducted last year, and there were some notes about RTD’s internal audit function prompting GM Johnson to bring in a peer review from APTA that identified areas for growth and improvement in that function. In the finance subcommittee, they have started to address some of these identified growth areas.

*Councilmember Mullica* asked how should she manage incoming comments from residents?

*Director Buzek* said that residents could reach out to him directly or they could relay messages through Councilmember Mullica – whatever was easiest for them.

1. **RTD Accountability Committee Draft Recommendations**

*Councilmember Mullica* reviewed slides of the Accountability Committee’s Draft Recommendations. The Governance subcommittee recommended that RTD should have a more collaborative decision-making structure to increase input from local communities by way of forming sub-regional service councils and reviewing the Board of Directors makeup. The Operations subcommittee recommended that RTD should simplify fares and pass programs to improve the customer experience and increase ridership by reviewing Fares and Pass Programs and addressing Operator Retention. The intent behind the Operations recommendations was to make it easy to pay and ride for all customers. The Service subcommittee recommended that RTD should address Accessibility and Infrastructure issues, view the system as an entire Multimodal Transportation system by partnering with more micromobiltiy options at stations, and improve overall Service Delivery. In terms of the Unfinished FasTracks Corridors, the Committee recommended to continue to aggressively find solutions to fund these corridors, with a special emphasis on a full analysis for the completion of NW Rail to ensure there is a level set of facts for this service delivery. The note regarding the NW Rail completion in 2036 will be removed from the final report. The Committee also recommended that RTD actively pursue partnerships with local governments, non-profits, business and other institutions that will expand RTD resources and service. The Transparency and Reporting subcommittee suggested that RTD provide easy-to-understand system performance and financial reporting documents on their website for the public, stakeholders, partners and elected officials to see and use. In terms of next steps, we have a meeting to formally adopt these recommendations on June 28. As always, please reach out to her with feedback or questions.

*Mayor Seitz* said she would like to voice her support for adding these recommendations into the upcoming RTD fare analysis.

*The eBike presentation was postponed to the July meeting.*

*Meeting adjourned at 9:03 AM.*