**NATA Board Meeting Minutes**

**August 26, 2021**

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

**Zoom Virtual Meeting**

[**Meeting Recording**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KiXvYiOVqw0)

**NATA Members (who signed in)**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Lisa Hough** | ACREP CEO | **Harold Thomas** | Fed Heights Mayor Pro Tem |
| **Deb Durand** | ACREP | **Joan Peck** | Longmont Council |
| **Lynn Baca** | Adams Cty Commissioner | **Phil Greenwald** | Longmont Staff |
| **Chris Chovan** | Adams County Staff | **Julie Mullica** | Northglenn Council |
| **Janet Lundquist** | Adams County Staff | **Sara Dusenberry** | Northglenn Staff |
| **Greg Mills** | Brighton Mayor | **Brook Svoboda** | Northglenn Staff |
| **Chris Montoya** | Brighton Staff | **Karen Stuart** | SCMN |
| **Joseph Leon** | Brighton Staff | **Carson Priest** | SCMN |
| **Guylenn Castriotta** | Broomfield Mayor | **Tammy Herreid** | SCMN |
| **Liz Law Evans** | Broomfield Council | **Jessica Sandgren** | Thornton Mayor Pro Tem |
| **Sarah Grant** | Broomfield Staff | **Kent Moorman** | Thornton Staff |
| **Deven Shaff** | Broomfield City Council | **Anita Seitz** | Westminster Mayor |
| **Nicole Frank** | Comm. City Mayor Pro Tem | **John Voelz** | Westminster Council |
| **Joe Wilson** | Commerce City Staff | **Debra Baskett** | Westminster Staff |
| **Brent Soderlin** | Commerce City Staff |  |  |

**SCMN Members (who signed in)**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Sam Taylor** | Broomfield Chamber  | **Mark Shotkoski** | NW Parkway |
| **Tim Stewart** | E-470 | **Joe Jehn** | Rick Engineering |
| **Carla Perez** | HDR |  |  |

**Agency Partners (who signed in)**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Andy Stratton** | CDOT | **Vince Buzek** | RTD Board |
| **Julie George** | CDOT | **Troy Whitmore** | RTD Board |
| **Jamie Grim** | CDOT | **Shelley Cook** | RTD Board |
| **Rebecca White** | CDOT | **Erik Davidson** | RTD Board |
| **Dan Marcucci** | CDOT | **Michael Davies** | RTD |
| **Jan Rowe** | CDOT | **Henry Stopplekamp** | RTD |
| **Jordan Rudel** | CDOT | **Dave Jensen** | RTD |
| **Nick Farber** | CDOT HPTE | **Chris Quinn** | RTD |
| **Doug Rex** | DRCOG | **Christina Zazueta** | RTD |
| **Ron Papsdorf** | DRCOG | **Pauline Haberman** | RTD |
| **Debra Johnson** | RTD General Manager |  |  |

**Guests (who signed in)**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Jeremy Rodriguez** | Cong. Perlmutter  | **Andres Carerra**  | Senator Hickenlooper |
| **Julie Skeen** | CIG | **Kevin Vargas** | Representative Crow |

1. **Welcome - Chair Jessica Sandgren – Thornton Mayor Pro tem**

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

1. **Approval of July 29, 2021 NATA Meeting Minutes**

*Karen Stuart* asked that the minutes be amended to reflect that Phil Greenwald of Longmont was in attendance at the July meeting.

*Motion to approve amended minutes was made by Councilmember Julie Mullica seconded by Councilmember Joan Peck and approved unanimously.*

1. **Action to approve draft revised NATA Mission Statement and Shared Values**

*Chair Sandgren* said that the group had looked at these statements and made a series of changes at previous meetings and had asked that people in the meeting take a look at them and offer any comments or edits. If no additional thoughts, she requested a motion to approve these.

*Karen Stuart* added that if this is approved today it will be added to NATA’s website and leave-behind document.

*Julie Mullica* said she appreciates everyone who contributed to these statements and thinks it ended up as a great product.

*Motion to approve NATA Mission Statement and Shared Values was made by Councilmember Julie Mullica seconded by Councilmember Joan Peck and approved unanimously.*

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

*Director Buzek* said that N Line operations had some electrification issues at Union Station that affected not only the N Line but all commuter rail lines. Those problems should have been fixed this past weekend. Ridership continues to grow on the N Line. RTD has often been criticized for being insular and not paying attention to stakeholders, but he has to hand it to their GM in her response to our new performance metrics that now include a community’s view of RTD. If they can reach out to the community and that community feels good about RTD, then that’s a step in the right direction for RTD.

*Director Whitmore* pointed out that the deadline for RTD to submit their report to the Accountability Committee is 9/3. Their staff worked very quickly and diligently to respond to the Committee in the 45-day window. It was a lot of work but work worth doing. He noted the great work that the DRCOG staff did to organize this process over the past year.

*Debra Johnson (RTD GM)* thanked the Accountability Committee for their recommendations, the DRCOG staff for their hard work, and staff at RTD for their work over the past year on this subject. Yesterday the final board-approved response was sent to the Accountability Committee, beating the deadline. She pointed out that the categories in the report were federal stimulus funding, sub-regional service councils, operator retention, board structure modifications, FasTracks options, reporting metrics and transparency, fixed route and paratransit, and leveraging partnerships. RTD agreed with the vast majority of the recommendations, but was not able to align with the recommendation to condense fare types to better serve disadvantaged communities simply because changing the fare structure requires a full federally mandated process that is about to get underway (Fare Study and Equity Analysis). RTD continues to embrace the opportunity to collaborate in every way possible. The board did agree to a study to explore the NW Rail service plan, and the Accountability Committee has tasked RTD with looking at possible ways to finish *all* FasTracks corridors.

*Director Davidson* added that the board did pass the proposed $8 million study to look at the cost of the NW Rail. This will include a study on viable vehicle technology, viable infrastructure, lifestyle costing, mitigation strategies, operational readiness, and projected ridership numbers. The immediate next step is to finalize a scope of work for a PEL study, with a plan to pull some money from the FISA account to complete this study. There is a possibility of additional RASIE grant funding as well. They are well aware that they are not in a place to move forward with the peak period service plan at this time, but this study should give RTD a floor for the lowest cost option for completing the NW Rail.

*Debra Johnson said* RTD will not actually be looking at doing a PEL study exactly, but collectively they will be doing a study in general.

*Director Whitmore* noted that there are a number of other RTD staff members on the call, as well as their government relations staff member Michael Davies. He acknowledged Michael’s recent work in Adams County and Brighton on the bus stop at the justice center. Work is ongoing to rectify that situation.

*Debra Johnson* added that she has personally investigated this Brighton service stop issue and RTD will work to come up with a short-term solution while they look at some better long-term solutions that are in compliance with the Federal Transit Authority and National Transit Institute. They should be moving toward a more long-term solution in the next week or two.

*Commissioner Lynn Baca* said that Brighton and Adams County have both been at the table with RTD to solve this issue, and thanked them for the collaboration and communication between the agencies.

*Mayor Anita Seitz* also thanked GM Johnson and all of the Directors for their attendance at NATA meetings. She is particularly happy about the recommendation for the peak service plan rail study for NW Rail. For the fares recommendation, the Denver Post made it seem as if RTD essentially said no to this recommendation, but what she’s hearing from RTD today is that RTD wants fare equity to be evaluated within the full process.

*Debra Johnson* replied that RTD recognizes that the fares are more expensive than most in the country and are cumbersome and they want to do something to address this. In order to alter the fares, they must adhere to a full fare equity analysis since they receive federal funding. Promotional fares are allowed for short periods of time, but nothing long-term.

*Mayor Anita Seitz* said that the article did somewhat of a disservice to this process, and she would be willing to be the messenger to better explain this issue as more of a required process. Her next question is in regards to the NW Rail study. Will this study work in tandem with progress that has been made with the FRPR study?

*Debra Johnson* replied these two processes will work in tandem and that is partly the reasoning behind the agreement that CDOT, FRPR and RTD entered into.

1. **Federal Infrastructure Legislation Update, Andrés Carrera, Sen. Hickenlooper** *(impromptu agenda item)*

*Andres Carrera ( Senator Hickenlooper’s Metro Regional Director)* said that the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act includes several provisions authored by Hickenlooper, including returning RTD’s deposit on Union Station loan. Hickenlooper’s provision would require the Department of Transportation to quickly return $28.9 million, plus interest, for a deposit that RTD made on a federal loan. The transportation funding in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Package contains the following:

1. $110 billion for roads and bridges, which would help repair 481 Colorado bridges and over 3,600 miles of Colorado highway in poor condition
2. $25 billion for airport improvements
3. $39 billion to modernize public transit
4. $66 billion for passenger and freight rail investments, including $16 billion specifically for Amtrak
5. Climate Change Mitigation and Clean Energy
6. $7.5 billion for the first-ever federal investment in a national charging network for electric vehicles
7. $2.5 billion for zero-emission buses
8. **CDOT GHG Rulemaking Presentation-Rebecca White, Director Division of Transportation**

*Rebecca White* said this work on the proposed rulemaking started in earnest with the passage of HB19-1261, with some ambitious goals set in place for GHG emissions reductions. With the GHG Pollution Reduction Roadmap published last year, as well as the recent passage of SB21-260, it laid out the requirement for CDOT to move forward with planning in light of GHG reduction efforts. Also, transportation has eclipsed the energy sector as the top polluter in our state. For CDOT and MPOs in the metro region nonattainment area, SB260 mandated that our plans updated to be in compliance with GHG reduction targets by October of 2022. The MPOs have been at the table consistently throughout this process, and their input has been instrumental so far. This proposed GHG rule being discussed today will be housed within CDOT’s existing “Rules Governing Statewide Transportation and Planning” by just adding on an additional lengthy section. The draft of the rule is available on the CDOT website, and the preamble/statement of purpose explains the rule in plain English. A number of new definitions were added that are important to know, and the new requirements are in Section 8. The rule would apply to CDOT and all 5 MPOs around the state, because those are the bodies that do transportation planning. CDOPT recognizes that each MPO is different in terms of scope, and because of that the 3 more rural MPOs are allowed a longer time to be folded into this rule. The way this will function is that CDOT and each MPO will take their various projects on their plans and run them through traffic modeling to better understand the amount of traffic that will be generated by that project, and the subsequent GHG emissions. Each MPO and CDOT (non-MPO) have their own specific GHG reduction target level set. If the plan and its projects do not meet the GHG reduction target set, there are defined GHG Mitigation Measures set forth in the rule that can offset the GHG produced by the projects on the list such as more bike/ped infrastructure investment. A large part of the rule is a GHG Report that must be submitted to the Transportation Commission that would detail all of these steps in the process. There are specific target reduction levels for each MPO and CDOT/Non-MPO area for each year from the baseline of 2025 until 2050. In terms of the Mitigation Measures, CDOT has some work left to do to finalize this list and the plan is to create a supplemental policy directive by April 2022 that will describe all of the possible mitigation measures. Some of the examples listed right now are transit, bike, pedestrian, emission reduction on construction projects, etc. With any rule there must be enforcement, and the enforcement if the GHG reduction targets are not met in the non-MPO areas or non-federally funded MPO areas CDOT can use 10-year plan funds to reduce GHG emissions and in MPO areas they must use their funding on GHG mitigation measures specifically. There is a provision that says that the TC can decide to move forward with a project if it is deemed appropriate for a number of reasons, including safety. The draft rule was released August 13, and now we are in a 60-day comment period. There are 8 hybrid in-person/virtual public rulemaking hearings on the books across the state to wrap up on 10/4. At the end of the 60-day comment period on 10/15 the comments will go to the TC with an earliest adopted date on 11/18 with a soonest adopted date of January 2022.

*Doug Rex (DRCOG ED)* thanked CDOT staff for their hard work on this GHG Rulemaking and encouraged those that are interested to listen in to his board work session and board meetings that will be publicly available. Those conversations are ongoing at DRCOG, so slowly but surely.

1. **HPTE I-25 Express Lanes TIFIA loan – Nick Farber, HPTE Executive Director**

*Nick Farber* said he took a tour of the I-25 North project in Region 4 and I wanted to talk a little bit about the TIFIA loan that HPTE is currently in the process of entering into. This is the type of loan that was done on US36 and also on C-470. TIFIA loans are extremely advantageous borrowing instruments for transportation entities because they allow deferred interest and payment for the first 5 years and it offers extremely low interest rates around 1.9% for a 30-year term. In this case they are going to include all of I-25 North from Segment 2 all the way up to Segment 9. The total borrowing amount is $191 million, with $154 million of that going toward segments 6,7 and 8. They will also pay back a loan from segment 2 and refinance for a lower interest rate on that segment. New tolling equipment will be used on segments 2 and 3 for fully dynamic toll pricing will also be purchased. They are essentially pledging the tolling revenue from segments 2-4 to get the entire corridor moving in the northern area. Because there are already two operational segments on the corridor, it’s acting as a good-faith toward getting the loan secured much quicker than on other projects like C-470. That tolling equipment will be installed in 2024, with operations coming online early in 2025. Repayment wouldn’t start until 2029-2030 for segments 6, 7 & 8 with very low likelihood that segment 2-3 revenues would be used because the toll revenue will be flowing at that point. As projects come online for these segments, they can use additional funds from the TIFIA loan to apply to additional improvements on segments 2-3. In terms of the schedule, they have received our BBB Flat rating assigned to this project, which is unheard of across the country. At this time, they are about to enter into negotiations with TIFIA to start this loan process in early October. They anticipate approval by the HPTE board by spring of 2022.

*Mayor Seitz* asked if HPTE has contemplated dedicated bus travels lanes in both directions between US36 and Union Station?

*Nick Farber* said he had not heard of any project like that on the radar, and that the express lanes on that stretch have guaranteed travel times so if the travel times are compromised, they must do something to improve that travel time. There has been some discussion around bidirectional travel lanes rather than just reversable lanes, and they are monitoring that potential project.

*Mayor Seitz* said she would just like to advocate for that project to be on the table sooner rather than later.

*Kent Moorman* asked for a ballpark range for revenue on segments 2-3 that is being pledged for this loan?

*Nick Farber* said he would have to double check for Kent on those exact numbers post-COVID because all he has are pre-COVID numbers right now

*Councilmember Mullica* asked how this loan will help address any solution for the safety concerns between 84th and 104th.

*Nick Farber* said that CDOT and the communities are working on a NEPA solution in that area and when that is finalized HPTE then can use the TIFIA loan structure to help potentially fund those changes.

*Karen Stuart* asked if Nick just committed TIFIA money to segment 2 to fix the ongoing safety issues?

*Nick Farber* said that yes, that is the structure of the loan in general in that they are leaving some wiggle room in there for segments 2-3 for when a project is identified in that area.

*Karen Stuart* said she noticed that there is no funding set aside in this loan for segments 4 and 5 and, those segments have a lot of work to be done with reconstruction of interchanges and the needed completion of toll lanes. When did he anticipate that the managed lanes will be available throughout the entire corridor?

*Nick Farber* said he didn’t know a timeline for segments 4 and 5 at this time. HPTE is happy to help CDOT when a project is identified on those segments.

*Karen Stuart* said that this express lanes system having continuous service is very important for NATA and the north metro region as we advocate for transit service to our northernmost areas. These projects are a part of NATA’s priority project list.

1. **RTD Reimagine briefing and feedback from NATA – Julie Skeen, CIG**

*Julie Skeen* said that ReImagine RTD has two major components with a short-term System Optimization Plan that will attempt to balance the mobility needs of the region with the fiscal constraints of RTD and a long-term Mobility Plan for the Future that will look at long term strategies for RTD’s role in the mobility of the region. This process was started before COVID but was shelved during the height of COVID but have now brought it back out with even more on the line as RTD looks to the future. If you’d like to join our working group meetings, please reach out as we’d love to have you. As a part of our internal feedback loop, we understand that we need to reprioritize valuing employee’s health, safety and wellbeing, focus on equity, and comprehend the significant loss of revenue because of COVID. We are trying to watch where ridership is coming back, and where telework will move in the coming months. The guiding principles for ReImagine RTD that were adopted by the board are mobility, equity, financial, partnerships, workforce and sustainability. In terms of the Mobility Plan for the Future, RTD recognizes that there is a ton of change and is not going to necessarily guess what the future holds for mobility, but instead we are looking at the key drivers and probable scenarios in order to ensure that RTD is nimble enough to react in an effective way. This modeling through EMAT will be completed in October, and would love to present those finding to NATA all at that time.

1. **Other:** *Karen Stuart* said that there are series of things on the agenda for upcoming meetings

including a FRPR District overview, and an update on the federal infrastructure package. It’s time again to provide updates for the Priority Project list. In October we’d also want to present an update on CDOT’s 10-year, Advancing Adams plan update, and TIP projects for the next cycle.

The regularly scheduled September 22nd meeting conflicts with CML. A poll seeking advice on Options to reschedule for Sept. 30 or cancel completely will be sent out shortly.