**NATA Board Meeting Minutes**

**September 30, 2021**

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

**Zoom Virtual Meeting**

[**Meeting Recording**](https://youtu.be/zha52ZxTZ_w?t=1296)

**NATA Members (who signed in)**

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| **Lisa Hough** | ACREP CEO | **Tim Williams** | Federal Heights Staff |
| **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 |
| **Brian Staley** | Adams County Staff | **Brook Svoboda** | Northglenn Staff |
| **Greg Mills** | Brighton Mayor | **Karen Stuart** | SCMN |
| **Sarah Grant** | Broomfield Staff | **Carson Priest** | SCMN |
| **Brent Soderlin** | Commerce City Staff | **Tammy Herreid** | SCMN |
| **Todd Fessenden** | Erie Staff | **Jessica Sandgren** | Thornton Mayor Pro Tem |
| **Malcolm Fleming** | Erie Staff | **Kent Moorman** | Thornton Staff |
| **Kevin Ash** | Frederick Staff | **Julia Marvin** | Thornton Council |
| **Harold Thomas** | Fed Heights Mayor Pro Tem | **Anita Seitz** | Westminster Mayor |

**SCMN Members (who signed in)**

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| **Sam Taylor** | Broomfield Chamber | **Gene Putman** | Putman Trans. Solutions |
| **Neil Goffinet** | FHU | **Myron Hora** | WSP |
| **Terry Nash** | HNTB |  |  |

**Agency Partners (who signed in)**

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| **Andy Stratton** | CDOT | **Vince Buzek** | RTD Board |
| **Stephen Harelson** | CDOT | **Troy Whitmore** | RTD Board |
| **Mike Keleman** | CDOT | **Allen Miller** | RTD |
| **Paul Jesaitis** | CDOT | **Michael Ford** | RTD |
| **Neal Retzer** | CDOT | **Michael Davies** | RTD |
| **Jan Rowe** | CDOT | **Henry Stopplekamp** | RTD |
| **Jordan Rudel** | CDOT | **Dave Jensen** | RTD |
| **Doug Rex** | DRCOG | **Michael Millage** | RTD |
| **Ron Papsdorf** | DRCOG | **Pauline Haberman** | RTD |
| **Debra Johnson** | RTD General Manager |  |  |

**Guests (who signed in)**

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| **Ashley Verville** | Cong. Perlmutter | **Andres Carerra** | Senator Hickenlooper |
| **Max Haynes** | Senator Hickenlooper | **Chris Rork** | Senator Hickenlooper |
| **James Souby** | NFRPR | **Brenda Schuler** | RedHawk Consulting LLC |

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 August 26, 2021 NATA Meeting Minutes**

*Motion to approve the minutes was made by Mayor Anita Seitz seconded by Councilmember Joan Peck and approved unanimously.*

1. **Reminder: Updates due for NATA’s Priority Projects list-** action item for October meeting

*Please send any project list updates to Carson or Karen ahead of the October 28th NATA Meeting for consideration of adoption into the Priority Project List.*

1. **Smart Commute updates: Carson Priest**

**Bike To Work Day Report –** SCMN supported a number of BTWD stations, and had a physical presence at the Adams County breakfast station at the confluence of the Platte and Clear Creek trails, the Northglenn Breakfast station at E.B. Rains Park, and both the breakfast and afternoon stations at St. Anthony North Hospital. The Adams County station saw roughly 100 riders while the other stations had fewer riders, mostly due to their location not on a major trail and COVID still having an impact on in-person office commuting.

**North Metro Commuter Survey -** The annual North Metro Commuter Survey has been underway for about a month now with over 1,200 responses so far from 14 individual employers and a few members of the general public. Some employers will conduct the survey in October because of their own internal timing, meaning that there will be even more responses by the end. NATA members Westminster, Longmont, Northglenn, and Thornton are all participating this year. SCMN is working with other large employers such as Regis University, Amazon, and others. This year SCMN is collecting data and conducting analysis according to what ETRP would have required for SOV rate goals, if it had been passed as a rule.

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

*Director Buzek* **-** The N Line celebrated it’s one-year anniversary this past month, and ridership continues to increase month-by-month bringing it closer to on-par with G Line ridership. There have been reports of station parking lots getting quite full recently. RTD has put the RFP out for a consultant to help with the fare and equity analysis. This study is a significant undertaking.

*Director Whitmore* **–** The board received a comprehensive review of the Re-Imagine program by RTD senior staff.

*Debra Johnson (RTD GM)* **-** RTD has been working with City of Brighton and Adams County staff to create a temporary and permanent solution for the Adams County Justice Center transit stop near Bromley Lane.

*Chair Sandgren* **–** The train was standing room only when going down to the Rockies game, so it’s great to see so many people riding the N Line and we hope it keeps going in that direction.

1. **Front Range Passenger Rail Special District update- Jim Souby, Chair, Southwest Chief and Front Range Passenger Rail Commission**

The Front Range Passenger Rail Commission recently published findings based on 2-years' worth of work, concluding that the Front Range Rail idea would be a legitimate and feasible alternative transportation option for the front range area. There is strong support for getting cars off of I-25 with this option from many groups, including automobile advocacy organizations. SB21-238 was passed this year, creating a district up and down the front range with representation on a board from 10 MPO/COG’s (2 from DRCOG), 6 special Governor appointees, 1 CDOT Executive Director appointee, and non-voting membership from various groups including BNSF and the I-70 Mountain Corridor. The reason for this board is to recommend a ballot initiative (with 2/3 vote from the board) to the Colorado voters in an election. Polling suggests that those within the district are in support of the project, and would even be willing to pay for it at some level. The Commission is driven to go after significant federal funding to pay for this project, and with the interconnectivity nature between states there is a good case to be made. The appointment process for the representatives on the board from these various groups is underway, with completion by May 15, 2022. The three necessary plans for this board to refer a measure to the ballot are a service development plan, an operating plan, and a financial plan. The service development plan will pick the route and station plan for the route. The current preference for the freight rail right-of-way for the entire line will be evaluated over the next year by a grant with funding from the federal government.

*Andres Carrera (Senator Hickenlooper’s Office)* **-** The office of the Senator is behind you in this effort, and please reach out if you ever need any federal support in this process.

*Mayor Seitz –* Do you have a rough timeline for when the route will be chosen out of the current analysis process?

*Jim Souby* **-** I don’t have a direct timeline, but our goal is to meet all of our federal and state requirements within three years with the hopes of referring a question to the ballot within the next three to five years. If this drags out too long, we lose momentum and it falls apart. The projects like this that have been successful around the country have shown competent aggression in their pursuit of their projects. I want to thank CDOT for their support on this project.

*Mayor Seitz* **–** The board of selected members will be referring the ballot measure to the public, correct? What about elected official’s term limitations if they are rotating on and off the board over this period of time?

*Jim Souby* **–** Yes, the board has the authority to refer that ballot measure. In terms of the elected officials on the board, we expect the MPO’s to match the correct elected official to the board that matches the either two- or four-year term on the board. There is no guarantee in the legislation that the MPO’s would make that decision, so a board member could rotate off if that’s how they’re selected. They can also continue on the board if they are former elected officials, if selected. The board will need 12 out of 17 votes for referral.

*Mayor Seitz* **–** Is there any early indication of which of the three alternatives in the north are most favorable?

*Jim Souby* **–** The Commission found that the freight right-of-way route would be the most feasible, simply because it is an existing rail line with right-of-way. We would need to have at least double track along the entire route to get our goal of 24 trains-per-day. This alternative is not a sure thing, but Amtrak is a major potential source of funding for this as well. We haven't issued a decision, but only a preference to this point.

*Councilmember Peck* **–** There has been discussion among freight providers to route that rail to the east into the plains away from the Front Range, and it’s my understanding that Wyoming is pursuing grants to make this happen. Do you think this is part of BNSF’s commitment to Front Range Passenger Rail?

*Jim Souby* **–** No. Neither railroad will proactively reroute their fright for passenger service. They are being as cooperative as we can expect.

*Gene Putman –* Are previous studies on this topic going to be used? I hope you have a list of public outreach folks in line for when the ballot question is referred.

*Jim Souby –* Yes, we have been using those studies already in our alternatives analysis. We certainly know that we need an extremely powerful public argument to pass this ballot initiative.

*Karen Stuart –* I want to be clear that CDOT’s Transportation Commission hasn’t weighted in on this project yet, and have yet to assign any funding to this process.

*Jim Souby –* Of course, we do know that the TC hasn’t voted on this yet despite the fact that I wasn’t at the past meeting.

1. **CDOT Update on Eisenhower Johnson Memorial Tunnel SB260 Action Plan – Steve Harelson, CDOT Chief Engineer**

The tunnel is about 9,000 feet long, with a maximum overburden of 1,470 with the easternmost side being underneath very slushy and wet rock and mud. The tunnel is old and in need of serious improvements to keep it operational and safe. The tunnel has a control center that not only monitors the cars coming into and out of the tunnel itself but the entire I-70 corridor. One of the main things that the workers in the tunnel monitor are vehicles that are too hot and may cause a fire, causing them to engage the fixed fire suppression system within the tunnel. There are $50 million worth of projects identified within the tunnel that are allocated from SB260 funds. There are a series of exhaust fans that keep the tunnel’s air quality clean and those motors are almost 50 years old and need to be replaced. There are also a series of tunnel drainage, plumbing and heat transfer projects that have been identified to be funded with SB260 dollars. Another big project is to address some of the tunnel lining challenges where the soil above is very wet and tends to leak through. The grout between the walls and the retainer barriers will also be replaced to secure the foundation of the tunnel. Finally, there are a series of smaller projects like fire extinguisher cabinet improvements and installation of an automated deicing system that will also be built with these SB260 funds. Those interested in a tour of the tunnel should contact Karen directly.

1. **Federal Infrastructure Bill Update- Andres Carrera, Denver Metro Regional Director for Senator John Hickenlooper**

*Chris Rork –* We expect to see a continuing resolution to fund the government through 12/3. There should be a house vote today on the infrastructure bill, but that is not certain. There is still a lot yet to happen in terms of rounding up votes for this bill, so we will keep watching it intently.

*Andres Carrera -* Transportation funding pertinent to Colorado in Bipartisan Infrastructure Act include:

* $110 billion for roads and bridges, which would help repair 481 Colorado bridges and over 3,600 miles of Colorado highway in poor condition
* $25 billion for airport improvements
* $39 billion to modernize public transit
* $66 billion for passenger and freight rail investments, including $16 billion specifically for Amtrak
* $73 billion for transmission lines, grid reliability, carbon capture and direct air capture, clean hydrogen, energy efficiency, and other energy innovation priorities
* $43 billion for wildfire and drought resiliency, weatherization, flood mitigation, and cybersecurity for critical infrastructure
* $7.5 billion for the first-ever federal investment in a national charging network for electric vehicles
* $2.5 billion for zero-emission buses
* The RECHARGE Act: Hickenlooper’s bill makes it more affordable to drive an electric vehicle by having states review utility rates for EV charging.
* A national standard to prevent marijuana-impaired driving: Hickenlooper’s amendment requires the federal government to recommend ways for researchers to access marijuana samples and study how marijuana impairs driving
* 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 related to Denver’s Union Station.
* $65 billion to ensure every American has high-speed internet: As part of the bipartisan group, Hickenlooper helped write the broadband section of the legislation. This investment will help close the digital divide and lower costs for consumers.

1. **Brief update on CDOT GHG Rulemaking: Karen Stuart**

CDOT is in the process of the rulemaking public comment period for the GHG reduction rule. There have been a series of hybrid in-person and virtual meetings that have taken place over the past couple of weeks, and there are a series of more meetings to come across the state for public input until 10/7. There have been a series of comments from both extremes thus far. Please submit your questions and comments on the CDOT website or attend one of these hybrid meetings.

*Meeting Adjourned at 8:58 a.m.*