**NATA Board Meeting Minutes**

**December 14, 2017**

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

**Adams County Economic Development, 12200 Pecos Street, Westminster**

**Welcome by Chair Herb Atchison and introductions.**

**NATA Members (who signed in)**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Barry Gore** | ACED | **Tim William** | Federal Heights Staff |
| **Rachel Anderson** | ACED | **Phil Greenwald** | Longmont Staff |
| **Chaz Tedesco** | Adams Cty Commission | **Brad Harvey** | Metro North Chamber |
| **Lynn Baca** | Brighton Council | **Greg Moss** | Metro North Chamber |
| **Kimberly Dall** | Brighton Staff | **Joyce Downing** | Northglenn Council |
| **Liz Law-Evans** | Broomfield Council | **Ashley Kaade** | Northglenn Staff |
| **Kevin Standbridge** | Broomfield Staff | **Catherine Sanders** | SCMN |
| **Roger Tinklenberg** | Commerce City Staff | **Cathy Bird** | SCMN |
| **Rick Teter** | Commerce City Council | **Karen Stuart** | SCMN |
| **Sean Ford** | Commerce City Mayor | **Eric Montoya** | Thornton City Council |
| **Mark Gruber** | Erie City Council | **Kent Moorman** | Thornton Staff |
| **Gary Behlen** | Erie Staff | **Kevin Forgett** | Thornton Staff |
| **Daniel Dick** | Federal Heights Mayor | **Herb Atchison** | Westminster Mayor |
| **Renae Stavros** | Federal Heights Staff | **Debra Baskett** | Westminster Staff |

**SCMN Members (who signed in)**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Tony Marcello** | David Evans & Asso. | **Troy Whitmore** | United Power |
| **Denny McCloskey** | DEC Home Solutions | **Myron Hora** | WSP |
| **Rick Gabel** | Jacobs Engineering |

**Agency Partners (who signed in)**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Mike Lewis** | CCCDOT | **Alex Gordon** | NRFMPO |
| **Andy Stratton** | CDOT | **Paul Deeley** | RTD |
| **Jason Lucerna** | CDOT |  |  |

**Guests (who signed in)**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Jeremy Rodriguez** | Rep. Ed Perlmutter | **Andrew Dunkley** | Sen. Gardner |
| **James Colbert** | Merrick |
| **Melissa Antol** | Revolution Adisors |

* **Update on Trip to DC (Mayor Atchison)**

**Mayor Atchison:** I spent the last two days in DC with our Congressional delegations, and they are not moving forward on a budget decision. They are very split on the budget. Met with Bennet and Gardner both, and our other representatives from our metro. There is a bill in Congress for a seven-cent gas tax. However, their own studies show that the seven-cent tax would be a “negative,” as far as the budget (there is still impacts on the general fund). They have memos for 15-cents to get to equity, and there isn’t any support for that, for a national vote. I’m not hopeful.

Tiger Grants are still on the table, and Private Activity Bonds are still on the table as well. We aren’t sure how they will fair. One option was a bill for early refinancing, and our experience with that option in Westminster is seeing some significant savings.

For those of you in your communities that have children on CHP, CHP is in trouble.

A lot of things are moving in DC, and not much is favorable to us. Several of our representatives and officials are being replaced. There is not a working relationship between both sides, too much partisan politics. Only one or two representatives didn’t just point fingers at the other side of the aisle. I told them, if you bring the problems to the city level, we’ll get the problems solved!

**Karen:** Thank you for telling us about your trip. Regarding Private Activity Bonds, I wanted to mention that the Commission is anticipating the possibility of these PAB will be eliminated in the new tax reform bill. Using PABs has been a major savings for projects, and if they go away, it will be a significant funding tool loss. CDOT is using these as a finance mechanism for the Central 70 project so the Transportation Commission will do the financial close of this project before the end of 2017 in order to use PABs.

**Mayor Atchison:**  It’s tough to know what people are going to do at this point right now. Our representatives don’t have a good sense about what is going on outside of Washington. Our Property Tax piece is looking like a $10K cap. CBDG Funds may be gone from the 2018 budget as well. However, I don’t feel very confident about anything that is going on right now. It’s very discouraging. We did get some time with our elected officials, which is good. We were able to see the actual official, not just staff.

Another thing to be aware of is the Area Agency on Aging funding. DRCOG administrates AAA for this area. Denver put service providers on notice about cuts for this coming year. If Congress votes to give money to the AAA, it takes 2 months before the O&B sends it to the states. The states won’t spend money on it during that time because of the risk that they won’t be paid back. This will effect Meals on Wheels, Transportation (significant trips to medical and dialysis), and more. We will have people, including kids, who can’t make it to dialysis appointments. There are people’s lives on the line, if we lose that funding. That’s part of why we were there with DRCOG. Our teams with DRCOG are out talking with other funding options, like Daniels Fund, to see if there could be bridge funding to keep those programs operating. We’re still in great risk of losing those programs.

* **Approval October 2017 Meeting Minutes**

***Approval of October 26, 2017 Meeting Minutes:*** *Motion to approve minutes made by Mayor Dick, seconded by Councilwoman Baca, and approved unanimously.*

* **Nominations and Election of NATA 2018 Officers- Vice-Chair and Treasurer**

**Discussion *(regarding Vice Chair – split between start and end of meeting)*:**

**Mayor Atchison**: We established a plan of succession last year, and as a result, Councilwoman Baca will be the 2018 Chair, and I will be Immediate Past Chair. Normally, the Treasurer would be the Vice Chair, but Councilman Montoya will not be the Thornton NATA rep in 2018. Are there any other nominations from floor?

**Eric Montoya:** I’m sorry I won’t be able to serve as Vice Chair, and I would like to nominate Chaz Tedesco as Vice Chair.

**Councilmember Downing:** I would like to nominate Sean Ford as Vice Chair.

**Mayor Atchison:** Any other nominations for Vice Chair? Icall to close nominations on the floor.

*(votes tabulated).*

**Mayor Atchison**: I would like to congratulate Mayor Ford for the winning votes to become Vice Chair.

**Discussion *(regarding Treasurer – split between start and end of meeting)*:**

**Mayor Atchison**: Now we have Treasurer to elect. Are there any nominations from the floor? (No nominations voiced). Mr. Harvey, would you like to be Treasurer?

**Brad Harvey**: declined nomination

**Karen Stuart**: I wanted to remind everyone that Westminster keeps track of all the money and funds, and provides a report for the Treasurer, so it isn’t a hard lift. They do a great job. Under the Treasurer’s position, you’d normally also ascend to Vice Chair, and then Chair.

*(break, decided to wait until Vice Chair votes were tabulated).*

**Councilmember Downing:** I nominate Chaz Tedesco.

**Commissioner Tedesco:** accepted nomination

**Mayor Atchison:** Any other nominations for Treasurer? *(none voiced)* Icall to close nominations on the floor.

***Approval of Mayor Ford as Vice Chair and Approval of Commissioner Tedesco as Treasurer****. Motion to approve by Barry Gore, seconded Councilman Montoya, and approved unanimously.*

* **Treasurer’s Report and 2018 Budget Requests**
* **NATA Administrative Services- SCMN $20,384**
* **NATA Membership in Smart Commute- SCMN $12,360**

**Discussion**:

**Montoya:** There will be budget request coming up momentarily. For our report, as of today, all dues have been collected, and 2018 invoices will be going out. Expenses are NATA Admin ($19,800), Smart Commute dues ($12,000). There is also a small reimbursement for food in 2017 for Smart Commute ($57.60). The last is the NATA consultant for Revolution Advisors for consulting ($10,000). We have a cash balance of $61,000 (approximately).

**Karen Stuart:** $21,600 is what NATA brings in for dues, so we’ll have a larger balance in the account after the 2018 dues come in. Smart Commute is asking for approval of Administrative Services and asking for Membership. Our request for 2018 is a 3% increase over 2017, which was a request made for us rather than waiting and having a larger increase a few years from now.

**Mayor Atchison:** Any questions?

***Approval of Smart Commute Administrative Funding Membership in Smart Commute:*** *Motion to approve made by Councilman Montoya, seconded by Councilmember Downing, and approved unanimously.*

* **SCMN Update- Karen Stuart, Cathy Bird**
  + **Renewal of DRCOG MOU for 2018-2019**
  + **2018-2019 TDM Pool Grant application: New Resident Commute and Travel Options Targeted Outreach Program**
  + **2018-2019 TDM Pool Grant application: Regional Bike Share Program**

**Karen Stuart:** We have a number of different funding mechanisms aside from NATA. We appreciate NATA’s support, since you created us. We’re also doing two TDM Pool Grant applications this year. One is a Regional Bikeshare with Brighton, Northglenn, Thornton, Federal Heights, Commerce City and Adams County – all of these communities are working together on developing a regional program on the east/south side of our area. We would like a Letter of Support for this grant.

The other grant is New Resident Commute and Travel Options Targeted Outreach Program. We are targeting five areas in our region. We’re using existing Park-n-Rides, and will be targeting new residents near Park-n-Rides.

We think both applications are strong, and have vetted them with DRCOG. We won’t know until next year about whether or not they will be funded, but would like a letter of support. Regarding the Bikeshare program specifically, these communities are being targeted because they have an interest in a regional program but don’t yet have anything in place; some NATA communities have already moved forward to implement your own bikeshare programs or plans.

**Mayor Atchison:** Any objections for letters of support? Moving on to the DRCOG MOU then.

**Karen Stuart:** Regarding the DRGOC MOU – every two years we enter into an MOU with DRCOG, its $80,000 annually and it is a reimbursement grant. Our current grant ends in April, and we’ll establish a new grant in April that will be 18 months. If you see us in the community, or working with your employers, much of that is reimbursed by DRCOG.

***Approval to send the letters of support regarding the renewal of the DRCOG MOU for 2018-2019, and the two 2018-2019 TDM Pool Grant applications Smart Commute is submitting: New Resident Commute and Travel Options Targeted Outreach Program and Regional Bike Share Program.*** *Mayor Atchison asked if there was any opposition, there was no opposition, so the Letters of Support had unanimous approval.*

* **Introduction of Newly Appointed CDOT Executive Director Mike Lewis**

**Karen Stuart:** Mike Lewis is here, and we’re thrilled to have him. He’s been Deputy Director for several years, and has been appointed Executive Director to replace Shailen Bhatt. (Karen read Mike Lewis’ bio). After working with Mike for the last few months, I’ve been impressed by his leadership style. He works with the commission very well. We wanted to introduce Mike to NATA and have Mike meet our NATA reps.

**Mike Lewis:** Thanks for having me here, it’s a pleasure. I am a “carpet bagger,” I’ve only been here for 2.5 years, but my wife and I love it. To emphasize that I am still getting used to the metro, my GPS sent me to the wrong location.

Andy and Jason are here from CDOT. I don’t know all the 3,000 CDOTers, but I wanted to thank you both for sending me a list of the projects in the area for my review last night. The people of CDOT do such good work in difficult circumstances.

The general public have no idea if the road that they are on is state, local, federal, and they don’t care, and they shouldn’t care. Transportation is a system. You don’t want think about the road you’re on when you’re traveling, you just want to get where you are going. We work closely with the local jurisdictions because we want the entire system to work together, and not be a mess going from one jurisdiction to another.

I wanted to recognize Karen on the CDOT Commission, she is really great and has wonderful expertise, and is a true asset. Our commission is filled with really great people that know a lot. Sydny Zink representing Durango, as an example - Durango is 4.5 hours from the nearest interstate, so they have a very different perspective on transportation, but she also understands that transportation in the Denver metro is important to Durango, for their economy.

I’ve been in this industry for 33 years. I started as a traffic engineer in western Massachusetts in the 80s. Boston is very urban, but other portions of Massachusetts are rural. People in the rural areas feel like they don’t get the funding, so I have that experience. I also have experience in a very big transportation project (The “Big Dig”).

Thank you for welcoming me. I committed to Shailen to be here to “turn off the lights” on the Hickenlooper administration. I will be here until the end, when the new administration comes in. There are a lot of really important projects and initiatives at work. I do believe that transportation is underfunded in Colorado, and in the rest of the country. I’m glad to be here to be in a state that is growing, and is economically strong. It’s a place that people are coming too, that is growing. If we don’t address this growth, we’ll be the next LA, or Atlanta. It’s great that groups like NATA are thinking ahead of time to anticipate growth, to do it in a proactive way. Raising revenues is always controversial, and it should be – elected officials need to work together to strike the right balance.

I often ask groups why the Transportation Department exists. Lay people will say, “You shovel snow, you fix bridges.” However, in our view, we exist for two reasons. First, to support economic vitality of whatever jurisdiction you’re in. The second reason is to support the quality of life for the people who live there. People who live here love the area, the access we have, and that is what attracts people as well. The transportation system can either support the quality of life or detract from it. Right now, I think it’s detracting from it.

How many people have been here for 40 years? What was this land here? (farmland). How long did it take to get downtown? (10 minutes). I say this to emphasize how much things have changed. This area has become much more of an urban environment. I come from an area of the country that is thick with development. We’re becoming that here. We have an opportunity to go in a different direction than that.

David Krutsinger, Head of our Department of Transit and Rail, said yesterday that we have an opportunity now to look at cites all around and ask, what kind of city do we want to be? Vancouver, Atlanta, Portland…depending on the answer, we can put our investments to work. If it’s unplanned, we’ll end up as a city model that people don’t want.

I have a year left, and CDOT will be here for the rest of time. There are a number of projects we want to get done. The Central 70 project is something we want to get done. It’s controversial, and our job at CDOT is to listen to opposition and try to address needs, but we can’t let the controversy stop the project. The I-25 corridor is very important, and we have a plan for this corridor, and the south I-25 corridor. The I-70 mountain corridor, it’s the lifeblood for our tourism industry. There are projects I want to focus on, to get a stake in the ground before the end of this administration. Another great thing that Shailen brought to Colorado was advancing technology. We’re in an era of operations, we need to use technology and the private sector to advance our transportation system. RoadX was a name 2 years ago, and now it’s a real program to help maintain a focus on technology.

The ultimate thing is the passage of SB-267 in the spring, which is good and bad – $1.8B dollars will allow us to advance 10-20% of the needs of the state. It’s a “down payment” toward improvements, but it’s a drain on our assent management budget. I use the analogy of a ship wreck to describe 267: You have a boat with 10 people, and there is no food, so everyone gets along. However, suddenly someone has opened a container and found five crackers. Then the people start fighting over the crackers. This is what 267 is – it isn’t enough, and it’s going to stimulate fighting. We need a new project, and we’re hoping to use the “crackers” as “bait” to get a larger “fish” to “feed everyone in the lifeboat.” If we can identify enough projects for a $6B list, it will move us forward. 267 is “bait” for funding a much larger program, for all modes. It isn’t just about the interstate program, its also about addressing local needs as well. There also needs to be funding for alternative modes as well. Our area isn’t going to stop growing anytime soon.

**Discussion:**

**Commissioner O’Dorisio:** You mentioned other models. I like that we have a “blank slate,” and at the bottom, you can only “go up.” What is the best way to approach new models? You’ve identified models out there, and I think we can all agree that LA is not the model we want. What can we explore on our own?

**Mike Lewis:** I think Portland a couple of decades ago, they had a few issues in front of it. Of course, that was a very progressive area. They are more contained than our metro. The analogy with Massachusetts is similar – the mountains are like the Atlantic ocean. 120 years ago in Boston, they built out the subways to deal with their growth. Boston couldn’t function today without the transit system. The Red Line carries 100,000 people every morning. I’m not a big fan of the Houston and Dallas models, and I think they are trying to move forward as well. I’d say, as you travel, really observe the transportation system of whatever city you are in, and see how the transportation system works. Toronto is big, but they also have a big transit system. Our region isn’t unique, most areas are wrestling with this question.

**Commissioner O’Dorisio:** You mentioned transit a lot more than widening roads.

**Mike Lewis:** I’m an advocate of transit where it makes sense. I’m also a highway guy (I built the biggest highway in the country). There are areas that need more capacity. These are things that absolutely need to be done. I’m saying, though, that if you look ahead 50 years, at DIA driving growth, do we want to keep adding a 4th lane, 5th lane, 6th lane until we’re LA? I’m not sure that’s what you want to do.

**Karen Stuart:** I can’t let you go without saying something about I-25. This group did a lot to coalesce around the I-25 plan. There is a lot of work still left in the PEL up to Highway 7. When we worked with the transportation director at the time, we were reluctant to take on a toll project. We resisted, but were told it is how it needs to happen. Lately in the paper, however, there has been a lot of resistance from El Paso County to tolling the I-25 Gap Project. I want to emphasize that we didn’t want tolls either. We hope that CDOT continues to remember that a policy was advanced to us that expansions will be tied to tolls.

**Mike Lewis**: I’ll respond, tolls aren’t about revenue, it’s about management. It’s a tool to manage growth. The #1 benefit is about travel time reliability. It gets derided and called “Lexus Lanes,” but it’s more than that. You guys are way ahead of the south side of the city. We have a lot of education to do on the south side. It’s about those peak hours, where you need to get to a flight, to an appointment, and the lane means you can get there. If you don’t need to, and it doesn’t matter if you take 7 more minutes on your trip, you’ll stay in the general purpose lanes. That is the reason we’re doing it, trip reliability.

* **NATA Priority Project Update– Debra Baskett and Melissa Antol, Revolution Advisors**
  + **Master Projects List White Paper overview**

**Debra Baskett:**  I’m looking at all this stuff with the “glass half full” perspective. We didn’t think we’d have anything 10 years ago on I-25, and we’ve made progress. Let’s really work hard, and be strategic, with this session, with allocating effort and resources. I encourage everyone to take this seriously. Let’s gear up to make some decisions.

**Melissa Antol:** We took actions based on our feedback from NATA in October, and met in November to work on some policy, and then met with SPC (*reviewed presentation*). Jeanne will talk from a staff perspective on our discussions.

**Jeanne Shreve:** We met with staff to talk about how working on this every two years hasn’t been flexible enough. We have created a framework where we update the list annually at the January board meeting. At the January board meeting, we’ll take a look at the priority list in light of focused initiatives. We’ll keep the “Tiers” conceptually, but will be thinking about them differently – “Tier 1” would be projects we’d actively start advocating for, “Tier 2” would be projects we’d endorse (usually these are more local projects), and “Tier 3” would be projects that are Horizon Projects We’re trying to be more descriptive with what the Tiers mean. What we’d like to do is be able to act more quickly on opportunities like the 267 funds. We can update our list of projects quarterly, and can be flexible to pursue different initiatives. There will also be an opportunity to introduce new projects on the Chair’s discretion.

**Melissa Antol:** (*reviewed presentation*). We’re affirming that priority projects need to be in the NATA territory (thus NMIACS is “Endorsement”/Tier 2). We will need final input to Master Project List by January 16.

**Mayor Atchison:** We’ve been hitting this hard for the last year, elected officials, are you working with your staff? If you haven’t been, shame on you. You need to be working with your staff members. Your staff has been working hard to ensure the projects your communities need are in here, all the way up to Longmont. Part of the funding process is also the upcoming TIP process. For everyone that is in the DRCOG level, you better be there, because the final decisions are going to be made. Have representation there, this will have a large effect on our projects and what we can fund. We need to make a final decision next month. Come prepared, and Lynn will be in charge of getting a final decision. If the TIP policy goes through, between regional and sub-regional, we have a lot of possibilities to move forward on.

**Denny McCloskey:** This is the time that we need to think about this as a regional level as well. If we fail to act together, we’ll lose out to other groups that are willing to work together.

* **CDOT: N-I-25 Express Lanes Project- Segment 3 Update- Jason Lucerna**

**Jason Lucerna:** I’m the project engineer on the North I-25 Managed Manes, Segment 3 project. Wanted to give you all an update on what is going on (*shared presentation*). Project is 60% complete. The new revised completion date is early 2019, and tolling will begin in summer 2019. There have been some delays on the project. Right now, the RTD tunnel and pedestrian tunnel is complete, and sound walls are being installed (90%). We’ve had some concerns with the southwest quadrant residents; we built a retaining wall there, and will be building the sound wall soon (the retaining wall isn’t the sound wall, which is what residents feared).

Upcoming work (*covered in presentation*). There will be work on Eastbound 120th to accommodate a separate movement for the RTD buses. Traffic will be pushed to the outside lanes, as portions are complete (which will allow us to work in the median).

There was some concerns about the new businesses opening near 144th and Highway 7 – CDOT shouldn’t be obstructing any openings, because we’ll be in the final project stages at that point. If there is any work going on, it will be in the median, so it won’t impact the businesses.

We’re also adding median lighting, which is new to the budget. We’ll be adding the 70-foot tall overhead lights just like segment 2 has. The budget and schedule is still being worked on, as you can see this is a new addition.

**Discussion:**

**Mayor Atchison:** From the original schedule, how far behind are you?

**Andy Stratton: T**he original schedule was October of 2018. We’re about 4-5 months behind.

**Barry Gore: B**ecause of the premier outlets, will there be a continuous merge/off lane between 136th and 144th?

**Jason Lucerna:** It should be a continuous lane.

**Kent Moorman:** You said you’ll have the final configuration in place for the new businesses. My concern is that we’re adding a lot of new employees at Amazon, we would like to have the express lanes open, even if there isn’t tolling, in 2019. When you say 2019, what will be open in October when the new businesses open?

**Jason Lucerna:** Depending on how much we can accelerate the schedule, the worst case is that some of the express lanes would still not be open, inserting tolling loops and working on the tolling infrastructure. That is the worse case scenario. We can try to focus on the area of the most concern, we could bring that up to the contractor. Right now, that is the “finishing up” time in the median. The GP lanes and ramps would be finished.

**Kevin Standbridge:** What’s the status for construction of the next segment of tolled express lanes from NWP/E470 to SH7?

**Andy:** We’re under contract with a TSH for design. We working on the design all the way up to Highway 66.

**Mayor Pro tem Gruber:** I’m happy to hear the news about E-470, we’re having a lot of growth north of I-25. We need to deal with the I-25 and Highway 7 interchange. We need to take into consideration the traffic generated at this intersection by the new businesses, including IKEA.

* **RTD N-Line Update- Paul Deeley**

**Paul Deeley:** My role is to monitor the work product and make sure it complies with the technical project. I have a handful of slides to provide updates. (*Shared presentation, including recent photos of all the stations*).

**Discussion:**

**Mayor Atchison:** What is the schedule for opening?

**Paul Deeley:** The original schedule was 4.5 years, right now the recovery schedules is 2 years from the spring. So late 2019, early 2020.

**Mayor Atchison:** At the last report to NATA, we heard 2019, and now we’re hearing 2020. When will you guys have a sit-down with the contractor to get a viable schedule?

**Paul Deeley:** They are sitting down right now. It’s all financial. I can’t address. There was an article Friday that was pretty accurate with how things are at the moment.

**Mayor Atchison**: Knowing that Paul isn’t a decision maker, any further questions? This is a concern we continue to have, that we can’t get a predictable date from RTD. The way it looks now, I’d be surprised to see operations before 2020. We understand that RTD is financially constrained, but this is a design-build project, there needs to be a way to get some certainty.

**Paul Deeley:** The southern section of the project is what caused all the delays – you can see in the north things are progressing very well. The delay in the south was the railroads, the approvals, the right away, and we started without having all the ROWs purchased. Sometimes it comes together, sometimes it doesn’t. This summer, all these north stations will look complete.

**Meeting adjourned at 9:10 am.**