

Meeting Minutes

Transit & Rail Advisory Committee Meeting Friday September 11, 2020

Introductions/ Meeting Overview/ Welcome:

Committee Members in Attendance:

David Averill - here
Craig Blewitt - here
Rob Eaton - not here
Matthew Helfant - here
Lauren Issac - not here
Dave Johnson- here
Will Jones - here
Danny Katz - here
Michael Koch- here
Alana Miller - here
Mike Ogborn - here
Vince Rogalski - here
Ann Rajewski - here
Jim Souby - here
Bill Van Meter - here

Round Table:

- CASTA sessions will be recorded if you miss them
- David Averill - averaging 11,000 rides a day on the gondola during COVID
 - Drivers were given recognition on the radio to talk about what they do for SMART
- David Johnson (RFTA) - they received a 5339 grant to update a maintenance facility
- Jim Souby (ColoRail) - Will have a meeting soon where Arizona DOT will present
- Bill Van Meter (RTD)- RTD's board selected their General Manager Debra Johnson
 - September 21st- North Metro Line will be opening
 - Significant number of probable layoffs for RTD to mitigate a \$166 Million deficit just for next year
- Alana Miller -- Ideas related to opening streets, transit, and for hire vehicles proposed with City and County of Denver
- Craig Blewitt - Just posted mobile ticketing RFP
 - Developing budget for 2021 which includes new bus route to new Amazon Fulfillment Center with 2,000 employees onsite
- Danny Katz - CDOT wrapped up STP which includes items such as reducing air pollution, focus on rural areas, and land use
- Qing Lin (CDOT) - CARES Act Phase II Allocation and release of 2021 NOFA
 - CARES Act Phase II Allocation was released this past Tuesday

- Our unit's priority will be to contract and distribute these funds out to the agencies
- David Krutsinger - Kay Kelly will be coming on with OIM
 - She has been working as a Transportation Climate Specialist with the Office of Energy and she will fill in for Sophie's role for the next 8 weeks

SWC & FRPRC Public Meeting Summary

Randy Grauberger (Speaker)

- DJ Mitchell is a new addition to the Commission
- During July they had an online public meeting and had close to 10,000 looks at the project
- Online Public Meeting
 - Input Survey Question #3: Primary purpose for using front range passenger rail?
 - Mostly leisure and recreation
 - Question #4:
 - Mostly Denver and the Airport
 - General Open Ended Comment Sentiment (503 comments):
 - General Sentiment to open ended questions was positive with almost 70% of the responses being positive
 - Big Takeaways:
 - Demand for Front Range Rail is highest for commuters, but also for recreation and special events
 - Reductions in emission and vehicle miles traveled projected based on modeling
- BNSF System compares favorably to peer rail systems
- FRPRC ridership is much higher for a Denver Union Station stop versus Burnham Yard
- Few end-to-end trips by any mode
- Amtrak has included a \$20 billion Network Modernization Program and have given \$2 Billion to the Front Range with no State match

Federal & State Legislative Update

Speaker (Andy Karsian)

- Policy issues being discussed:
 - Greenhouse Gas Roadmap discussion
 - Increasing the electric fleet across the State
 - Fees for clean energy projects across the state discussion
 - Front Range Passenger Rail discussion- we will likely see a bill proposed this year
 - Federal level: more updates may happen after the election

HCPF Update:

Speaker (Ann Rajewski)

- Memo proposed from CASTA to TRAC on NEMT brokerage:
 - Number of rider issues: really long wait times

- Call center representatives don't always understand where the riders are actually located
- Misinformation and clerical errors happening with the call centers
- Many different challenges for the riders
- Agencies aren't getting as many NEMT rides as they have in the past
 - Uncertain about where these rides are actually going
- CASTA is requesting a legislative audit of the brokerage program to help legislators understand the impacts of the program on the NEMT riders and providers
- Recommend that HCPF provide customer service tracking metrics to show progress toward working out the bugs of the current statewide brokerage.
- Recommend CDOT hire a consultant to document the impacts on transit agencies and customers as part of tracking the outcomes of the STP.
- Matt Helfant:
 - It seems like having profit NEMT brokerages does not work, probably because there is not room for sufficient profit margins so firms have to cut costs which usually mean insufficient customer service. I have seen NEMT brokerages come and go in the last decade in the Denver region and they seem to all have a lack of customer service based on feedback from stakeholders.
- Michael Koch (Winter Park):
 - What conversations have already happened with Intelliride and HCPF?
 - Rural transit is really difficult and training and pushing out information is necessary from Intelliride
 - Can we present some anecdotal information to HCPF?
- Ann Rajewski:
 - HCPF wasn't very open to conversations in the past
 - Many agencies want this brokerage not to happen again next year
 - First step is to hold Intelliride and HCPF accountable
- Will Jones:
 - Having the average answered wait times reports should be something we can get from Intelliride
- David Averill:
 - Fully in support of a legislative audit
- Craig Blewitt:
 - Supports an audit as well
- Ann Rajewski:
 - It would be helpful if CDOT came out with support of an audit
- Herman Stockinger:
 - I don't know if it's appropriate for one agency to ask that another agency is audited, and probably not with CDOT to request an audit
 - The Governor's Office may not accept that request
 - It's entirely appropriate for TRAC to ask CDOT leadership to speak with HCPF leadership

- **Motion: Asking the leadership of CDOT to work with the leadership of HCPF to find solutions for the issues we are experiencing regarding Intelliride and the NEMT brokerage.**
 - **One opposed**
 - **Motion carries**

PD-14 Review & Update:

Speaker (Audrey Dakan)

- PD-14 guides statewide plan development
- Goal areas:
 - Safety, Asset Management, and Mobility are proposed goal areas
- TAM (What has changed?)
 - Fall 2018, CDOT TAM Group Plan was completed
 - Includes 53 rural and small urban public transportation providers
- State of Good repair performance measures now includes:
 - Rolling stock
 - Equipment
 - Facilities
- CDOT owns fleet vehicles but doesn't operate them
- System Performance Goal Area
- (Current Goal & Objectives):
 - Increase ridership of small urban and rural transit grantees by at least an average of 1.5% statewide over a five-year period beginning in 2012.
- Proposed Goals & Objectives
 - Reliability and Congestion
 - Environmental Impact
- Mobility Goal: Reduce travel time lost to congestion and improve connectivity across all modes with focus on env impact, operations, and transportation choice statewide.
- Current hope is by July 2021 we can get ridership back to previous levels from 2019 and then presume a 5 percent increase each year after July 2021
- Mike Timlin:
 - Each bus is limited to 22 passengers with a 76% drop in fare revenue possibilities
- Increase unlinked passenger trips from small urban rural transit agencies proportional to population growth
- Adoption of revised PD-14 plan in October 2020
- Consideration of PD 14 objective performance in preparation for FY22 annual budget process - November 2020

Snowstang Winter Operations Update 2020-2021:

Speaker (Mike Timlin)

- Asking for guidance from TRAC about future Snowstang operations
- Weighing interest from Vail and Winter Park resorts for participation in 2020-2021 ski season

- Snowstang would likely be subject to similar guidelines as Bustang while operating in pandemic times.
- Current pandemic operations:
 - 22 passenger max capacity
 - Masks required at all times onboard
 - Enhanced cleaning procedures and sanitary requirements
- If Snowstang operates the 2020-21 ski season, do we require an increase in resort subsidy to cover the additional cost of social distancing requirements?
- Do we not operate Snowstang in the 2020-21 ski season, in order to conserve cash until ridership recovers?
 - Michael Koch and Danny Katz both recommended holding off on running the service
 - David Averill proposed if you do run ask for a subsidy from the resorts to run