

**REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
WASHOE COUNTY, NEVADA**

FRIDAY

9:01 A.M.

October 15, 2021

PRESENT:

**Neoma Jardon, Reno City Council Member, Chair
Vaughn Hartung, Washoe County Commissioner
Oscar Delgado, Reno City Council Member
Bob Lucey, Washoe County Commissioner (Arrived 9:26)**

**Bill Thomas, RTC Executive Director
Adam Spear, Legal Counsel
Darin Tedford, Deputy Director of NDOT (Alternate)**

NOT PRESENT:

**Ed Lawson, Mayor of Sparks, Vice Chair
Kristina Swallow, Director of NDOT**

The regular monthly meeting, held in the Chambers of the Washoe County Commission, 1001 E. 9th Street, Reno, Nevada, was called to order by Chair Jardon. Following the roll call and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of our country, the Board conducted the following business:

A request was made by a member of the audience to read into the record a Proclamation designating this date as Blind Americans Equality Day, 2021. Details of the proclamation may be found here:

[A Proclamation on Blind Americans Equality Day, 2021 | The White House](#)

Item 2 PUBLIC INPUT

Chair Jardon opened the meeting to public input and called on anyone wishing to speak on topics relevant to the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) that are not included in the current agenda.

Ms. Diana Mars (sp), local resident, expressed a complaint that ACCESS is taking too long to get her to her appointments.

Mr. Juan Martinez, local resident, said some of the ACCESS drivers do not escort non-sighted people to their destination when they get off the van and they also touch his wife's (seeing eye) dog as she's going down the stairs, which could result in an accident. Mr. Martinez said he's had his cane pulled by another passenger when he's getting off the bus which is very dangerous. Lastly, not all of the drivers wear their vests so it's not always easy to tell who is a driver.

Mrs. Dora Martinez, local resident, thanked the Board for removing Item 5.1 because it is more difficult to get to work and school with less buses available. She also believes that such low pay for ACCESS drivers is insulting and they deserve a living wage. She disagrees with moving ACCESS drivers to FlexRIDE as well.

Mr. Russel Radford, local resident, believes Keolis is being disingenuous to their employees and the union, and needs to negotiate in good faith.

Mr. Michael Humes, local resident, believes Keolis is not fulfilling their contractual obligations and is not negotiating in good faith. He would like Keolis to be fired.

Mr. John Gerhauser, Keolis coach operator, believes Keolis wants to take everything away that's been in the driver's union bargaining agreement for 40 years. He would also like a living wage and Keolis to be fired.

Mr. Earl Baynensen, Keolis coach operator, believes Keolis has no regard for state and local regulations and are bringing ridiculous offers to the table and should be fired.

Mr. Tim Hanifan, local resident, wished to add his voice for change and the willingness of management to listen to the drivers' working conditions. He would like the Board to do something.

Ms. Chastity Lockridge, Keolis employee, believes Reno and RTC's reputations are being affected by this strike and the parked buses because of the lack of drivers and scheduling. She doesn't like what is happening with the bus service in Reno. She would like a plan of action to be brought from Phil Pumphrey.

Ms. Jessica Schneider, local business owner, wished to stand up for the working class and worries that passengers can't get to work or their medical appointments. She added that this is embarrassing for the City of Reno.

Mr. John Locke, Keolis coach operator, wants to get back to work driving passengers to where they need to go. He doesn't think that Keolis actually offered to continue their existing bargaining agreement and can't believe they want to cut domestic violence to 24 hours and take away active military.

Mr. Ronald Dalton, representing the VA Administration, wants to know why a foreign company is running things in our country. He said he's been counseling many people because of this strike and it needs to end in a peaceful way.

Mr. Sarafin Castillo, recent resident, said he is really impressed with the bus system here under normal circumstances and because of the leadership of the Board and management. He would like the strike to end before it deteriorates to the point too many people are suffering.

Ms. Blanca Tejeda, local RIDE passenger, had a representative speak for her, saying it's costing her \$20 per day for her daughter to get to and from work and she's walking in the dark and cold

when it's dangerous. She wants to see the Board to support the employees because they are needed to keep the city running. Ms. Tejada also spoke briefly in Spanish.

Ms. Amanda Nelson, local resident, would like to know how Keolis can pay less than beginner warehouse employees make, and why would new drivers want to stay? She would like the Board to step in and do something to keep the good, experienced drivers and says the new, inexperienced drivers are putting passengers in harm's way.

Ms. Debbie Calkins, representing Teamsters Union, Local 533, asked if RTC is accepting bid proposals submitted to the media, is staff reviewing those offers? She said that only when Keolis brings and offer to the mutually agreed upon formal negotiations arena will it be considered. She would like to see RTC have a contractor that cares about our community.

Mr. Dave Martin, Keolis coach operator, commented on the professionalism of the drivers (coach operators) and requested that RTC and Keolis get the contract done.

Mr. Chris Fuqua, Vice President of Teamsters Union, Local 533, believes the ADA community is being harmed because the ADA drivers, who are under a separate contract, are being taken out of their own service to cover some of the RIDE service. He would also like to see driver pay improved and keep what they already have. He does not believe Keolis is negotiating in good faith.

Mr. Michael Lansborough, Keolis coach operator, said he has seen complete degradation of the relation between RIDE drivers and Keolis management staff. He doesn't think Keolis cares about passengers or the public.

Mr. Carlos Elizondo, local resident, requested that RTC try to fix the issues between Keolis and the Teamsters Union, Local 533. He doesn't understand why RTC hired a French company. He added that RTC Customer Service doesn't start answering the phones until at least 8:30 a.m. instead of 8:00 a.m. when they open.

Ms. Athena Duffy, Keolis coach operator, stated that things are not well since Keolis came on board. She requested help from the RTC so the drivers can get back to work and serving the community.

Mr. Dwight J. Nelson, stated that there have always been issues between businesses and unions, but has never seen a company take it out on the customers to get what they want like Keolis has been doing. He would like to see driver pay be increase to meet the increase in costs in our region.

There being no one else wishing to speak, the Chair closed public input.

Item 3 APPROVAL OF AGENDA

RTC Executive Director (E.D.) Bill Thomas requested to pull Item 5.1 from the agenda.

On motion of Commissioner Delgado, seconded by Commissioner Hartung, which motion unanimously carried, Chair Jardon ordered that the agenda for this meeting be approved with Item 5.1 removed.

Items 4.1 thru 4.15 CONSENT ITEMS

Minutes

4.1 Approve Minutes of the September 17, 2021, meeting (*For Possible Action*)

Reports

- 4.2 Acknowledge receipt of the monthly Planning Activity Report (*For Possible Action*)**
- 4.3 Acknowledge receipt of the monthly Engineering Activity Report (*For Possible Action*)**
- 4.4 Acknowledge receipt of the monthly Public Transportation/Operations Activity Report (*For Possible Action*)**
- 4.5 Acknowledge receipt of the monthly Procurement Activity Report (*For Possible Action*)**
- 4.6 Acknowledge receipt of the monthly Summary Report for the Technical, Citizens Multimodal, and Regional Road Impact Fee Advisory Committees (*For Possible Action*)**

Engineering Department

- 4.7 Approve a contract with Wood Rodgers, Inc., to provide design services and optional engineering during construction for the Holcomb Avenue Road Rehabilitation project in an amount not-to-exceed \$485,935 (*For Possible Action*)**
- 4.8 Approve a contract with Lumos and Associates, Inc., to provide design services and engineering during construction for the 2022 Preventive Maintenance project in an amount not-to-exceed \$800,280 (*For Possible Action*)**
- 4.9 Approve a contract with Lumos and Associates, Inc., to provide design services and engineering during construction for the 2022 Corrective Maintenance project in an amount not-to-exceed \$213,820 (*For Possible Action*)**
- 4.10 Approve a contract with Eastern Sierra Engineering P.C., to provide design services and optional engineering during construction for the California Avenue project between Newlands Circle and Arlington Avenue in an amount not-to-exceed \$352,435 (*For Possible Action*)**
- 4.11 Approve a contract with Westwood Professional Services, Inc., to provide design services and optional engineering during construction for the Traffic Signal Modification 22-01 project in an amount not-to-exceed \$276,984 (*For Possible Action*)**
- 4.12 Approve a contract with Eastern Sierra Engineering, P.C., to provide design services and optional engineering during construction for the 4th Street Reconstruction project in an amount not-to-exceed \$512,535 (*For Possible Action*)**
- 4.13 Approve an Interlocal Cooperative Agreement (ICA) with Board of Regents, Nevada System of Higher Education, on behalf of the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR) for a Post Construction Traffic Study of South Virginia Street within the Midtown Segment of the Virginia Street Bus RAPID Transit Project in the amount of \$49,775 (*For Possible Action*)**

Public Transportation/Operations Department

4.14 Approve a Contribution Agreement with the Downtown Reno Business Improvement District, a private Nevada nonprofit corporation, in an amount not-to-exceed \$100,000 per year for three years for transit related purposes, including ambassador services, cleaning/maintenance services, enhanced police services, and other special services within the Reno Business Improvement District located in the vicinity of downtown Reno (*For Possible Action*)

Executive, Administrative and Finance Departments

4.15 Approve modifications to RTC Personnel Rule 11.4 (Holidays – Fixed and Floating) (*For Possible Action*)

On motion of Commissioner Lucey, seconded by Commissioner Delgado, which motion carried unanimously, Chair Jardon ordered that Consent Items 3.1 through 3.15 be approved.

Item 5 PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS – (Item Pulled From Agenda Under Item 3)

5.1 Conduct a public hearing on potential service changes to reduce service for RTC RIDE (Routes 9, 13, 16, 21 and 26), RTC ACCESS (service area and hours) and RTC FlexRIDE (service areas and hours), beginning on or after January 1, 2022, as may be necessary as a result of ongoing staffing shortages being experienced by RTC’s primary transit contractors, Keolis Transit Services, LLC and MTM Transit, LLC; approve the service changes (*For Possible Action*)

- a. Staff presentation**
- b. Open public hearing**
- c. Close public hearing**
- d. Motion**

Items 6.1 thru 6.3 REPORTS (Informational Only)

6.1 RTC Executive Director Report

E. D. Thomas spoke on the following topics:

1. He gave congratulations to the following employees for their upcoming milestone service anniversaries.
 - Maria Paz Fernandez, Engineer II with 5 years of service on November 14th
 - Jeff Wilbrecht, Engineer II with five years of service also on November 14th
 - Andrew Jayankura, Engineer II with five years of service on November 21st

He also welcomed a new employee to the RTC team, Andy Chao, Senior Accountant in the Finance Department, who started work with us this month.

2. RTC has filed its motion to intervene in the Nevada PUC proceedings related to the Economic Recovery Transportation Electrification Plan. The proceeding is related to Senate Bill 448 from the 2021 legislative session. RTC is now preparing testimony supporting the goals of the plan, and describing potential RTC uses of grant money set aside for transit electrification. The plan proposes to allocate \$6 million for transit electrification statewide. Future updates will be provided to the board as the plan progresses.
3. Daylight Saving Time ends on Sunday, November 7th. It will be dark earlier, and statistics show that 80% of pedestrian fatalities occur between dusk and dawn.

As part of the goals and mission of the Vision Zero Truckee Meadows task force to keep our community safe, Vision Zero will again join the statewide hash tag Dusk 2 Dawn NV campaign to remind communities to take extra precaution to bring the number of pedestrian fatalities in our region to zero.

A video highlighting pedestrian safety tips is available for viewing at www.VisionZeroTruckeeMeadows.com. This video is also being promoted through RTC social media platforms and by our regional partners.

A special reminder to everyone participating in traditional trick-or-treating this Halloween to use extra caution on local streets, watch out for kids and drive safe.

4. On Friday, November 5th, Stuff A Bus for Children in Care will be held in partnership with the Washoe County Human Services Agency (HSA) and Target to support foster and adopted children.

The Stuff A Bus for Children will be located at the Target store in Sparks located at 1550 East Lincoln Way from 2 pm to 6 pm. HSA is requesting donations of brand new warm weather items such as jackets, coats, gloves, socks, blankets, hooded sweatshirts and sweatpants, boots, and gift cards.

The donations will be distributed through the Family Engagement Center in Sparks, which is the main site for ongoing support to families throughout the winter months.

5. The December 17 RTC Board meeting will be held at the Sure Stay Plus Hotel located at 1981 Terminal Way. There will be a short board meeting starting at 9 am which will be immediately followed by the Board Retreat where no action will be taken.

6.2 RTC Federal Report

E.D. Thomas said that a written report was included in the agenda packet for this meeting, adding that on October 1st, the 30-day extension for the FAST Act was approved.

6.3 NDOT Director Report

NDOT Deputy Director Darin Tedford provided updates on safety statistics, the Sustainable Funding Study, the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), the Spaghetti Bowl Express Project status, and provided information on the upcoming winter maintenance and equipment that will be on the roads.

Item 7 COMMISSIONER ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPDATES

Commissioner Hartung requested an explanation on how we are prohibited from involvement in Keolis/Teamster negotiations.

Commissioner Lucey requested to have Chair Jardon sit in as an observer/moderator during strike negotiations. He also requested to see details of the Keolis contract, including the number of drivers and their pay information.

Chair Jardon requested that regular roundtable meetings with the drivers should occur.

Commissioner Hartung asked if the Board could see the offers that have already been made on both sides of the negotiations. RTC Legal Counsel Adam Spears responded that the Board is not legally allowed to see any of the offers.

Commissioner Lucey said the RTC should convene an emergency meeting if needed.

Item 8 PUBLIC INPUT

Chair Jardon opened the meeting to public input and called on anyone wishing to speak on topics relevant to the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) that are not included in the current agenda.

Ms. Debbie Calkins, representing Teamsters Union, Local 533, welcomed any of the commissioner to attend as a moderator and an invitation will go out to Chair Jardon. She also mentioned that all the offers to date are posted on the Union's website for viewing.

Mr. Chip Evans, representing Indivisible Northern Nevada, considers Keolis, along with RTC's management of the transit system a failure. He believes Keolis is not meeting their contractual obligations and is not being a good employer.

Ms. Kandee Sebelius, first addressed Deputy Director Tedford, saying that the round-a-bout designs are ridiculous and putting buses with pedestrians is not safe. Also that signage on the freeways for tourists needs to be improved.

She then spoke as a Keolis coach operator, said that she is not proud to put her uniform on, be a resident of Reno or Washoe County. She would like to get back to work soon so she does not have to find another job.

Mr. Carlos Elizondo, spoke on how accidents have increased since marijuana was legalized. He also made additional comments that this transcriber was unable to decipher from the recording.

There being no one else wishing to speak, the Chair closed public input.

Item 9 ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 10:39 a.m.



NEOMA JARDON, Chair
Regional Transportation Commission