

**REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
WASHOE COUNTY, NEVADA**

FRIDAY

8:03 A.M.

February 16, 2024

PRESENT:

**Ed Lawson, Mayor of Sparks
Alexis Hill, Vice Chair, Washoe County Commissioner (Arrived 8:09 a.m.)
Devon Reese, Reno City Council
Mariluz Garcia, Washoe County Commissioner**

**Bill Thomas, RTC Executive Director
Adam Spear, Legal Counsel
Sajid Sulahria, Deputy Director of NDOT**

ABSENT:

Hillary Schieve, Mayor of Reno

The regular monthly meeting, held in the 1st Floor Great Room at Regional Transportation Commission of Washoe County, Reno, Nevada, was called to order by Chair Lawson. The Board conducted the following business:

Item 1 CALL TO ORDER

- 1.1 Roll Call
- 1.2 Pledge of Allegiance

Item 2 PUBLIC INPUT

Chair Lawson 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.

Earl Brynewen, CMAC member and RIDE driver, I'm asking if we can change the CMAC from virtual meeting back to an in-person meeting. We joined to help our system get back to how it was when it was good. FlexRIDE is an issue, you don't have enough drivers. It's too early to expand South Meadows, which is a huge area to cover.

Jennifer Iveson, Safe Routes to School with the Washoe County School District. I want to thank RTC for being an amazing partner in the first annual Pedestrian Safety Message Poster Contest. One of the buses is outside now, this is one of three buses and we're super excited. Having three buses with safety messages was more than we could have imagined. We thought there would only be one, and the RTC surprised us with three. We can't thank you enough for your commitment to Pedestrian Bike Safety in our community and your constant support of our program, Safe Routes to School and the students of the Washoe County School District. We will have assemblies at the three schools next week to announce the winners and have the buses for each winner presented to them and their schools.

Matthew McCarthy, Northern Nevada Public Health Air Quality Management Division, emailed public comment on February 15, 2024 @ 9:07 a.m. Attached you will find public comment from Northern Nevada Public Health, Air Quality Management Division specific to Agenda Item 4.4.2 for tomorrow's (February 16, 2024) RTC Washoe Board meeting.

The Northern Nevada Public Health, Air Quality Management Division (AQMD) has the responsibility to maintain federal air quality standards in Washoe County, Nevada. This letter is being written to express support for Agenda Item 4.4.2 which is for the approval of the purchase of six hydrogen fuel cell transit buses. As you may know, Washoe County struggles with elevated levels of a pollutant known as ozone. A major contributor to ozone in our region is the emission of nitrogen oxides (NOx) from combustion engines. Transit buses improve our air quality by reducing vehicle miles traveled, but they also emit this pollutant when powered by fossil fuels. AQMD estimates that over 7 tons of NOx is emitted from transit buses every year in Washoe County. By operating the six hydrogen fuel cell buses that are for approval in this agenda item, air quality in Washoe County will benefit. AQMD appreciates the efforts that RTC Washoe takes to improve our air quality and is in support of RTC's goal of a 100% alternative fuels fleet by 2035. AQMD requests that the Commission approve Agenda Item 4.4.2 and move forward with the purchase of the six hydrogen fuel cell buses. Sincerely, Francisco Vega, P.E., MBA, Director of Air Quality Management Division.

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

Item 3 APPROVAL OF AGENDA

On motion of Commissioner Reese to approve agenda, seconded by Commissioner Garcia, which motion unanimously carried, Chair Lawson ordered that the agenda for this meeting be approved.

Items 4 CONSENT ITEMS

Bill Thomas, RTC Executive Director pulled Item 4.5.3 from the Agenda, to be discussed at a later date.

4.1 Minutes

4.1.1 Approve minutes from 1/19/2024 Board meeting. (For Possible Action)

4.2. Reports

4.2.1 Acknowledge receipt of the monthly Procurement Activity Report. (For Possible Action)

4.2.2 Acknowledge receipt of the monthly summary report for the Technical, Citizens Multimodal, and Regional Road Impact Fee Advisory Committees. (For Possible Action)

4.2.3 Acknowledge receipt of the monthly Planning Activity Report. (For Possible Action)

4.2.4 Acknowledge receipt of the monthly Engineering Activity Report. (For Possible Action)

4.2.5 Acknowledge receipt of the monthly Public Transportation and Operations Activity Report. (For Possible Action)

4.2.6 Acknowledge receipt of the monthly Outreach Report from the Communications staff. (For Possible Action)

4.3 Engineering Department

4.3.1 Approve a contract with Headway Transportation, LLC, for design and optional engineering during construction services for the Traffic Signal Modifications 25-01 Project, in an amount not-to-exceed \$595,650. (For Possible Action)

4.3.2 Approve a contract with Wood Rogers, Inc., for design and engineering during construction services related to the McCarran Boulevard Safety and Operational Improvements Project, in an amount not-to-exceed \$2,970,000. (For Possible Action)

- 4.3.3 Approve a contract with Nichols Consulting Engineers, CHTD (NCE) for design services related to the Downtown Reno Micromobility Project, in an amount not-to-exceed \$2,498,920. (For Possible Action)
- 4.3.4 Approve a contract with CA Group, Inc., for design and engineering during construction services related to the Eagle Canyon Safety and Operations Project, in an amount not-to-exceed \$298,199. (For Possible Action)

4.4 Public Transportation/Operations Department

- 4.4.1 Approve four Senior/Disabled Transportation Program funding agreements totaling \$679,273.20, in amounts not-to-exceed \$360,886.30 for Access to Healthcare Network; \$136,717.40 for Neighbor Network of Northern Nevada; \$118,057 for the University of Nevada Reno, Senior Outreach Services; and \$63,612.50 for Volunteers of America. (For Possible Action)
- 4.4.2 Approve the purchase of six (6) hydrogen fuel cell buses utilizing the State of Washington's Cooperative Purchasing Agreement for Transit Buses Master Contract No. 06719, for an estimated amount not-to-exceed \$8,377,051.08. (For Possible Action)

4.5 Executive, Administrative and Finance Department

- 4.5.1 Approve a contract with Anderson Keuscher PLLC, for specialized legal services. (For Possible Action)
- 4.5.2 Approve modification to RTC Personnel Rule 10.16 regarding the employee wellness benefit. (For Possible Action)
- 4.5.3 Approve a contract with Simmons Group to conduct a classification and compensation study for the agency, in an amount not-to-exceed \$182,000. (For Possible Action) – **Pulled from Agenda by Executive Director Thomas.**
- 4.5.4 Acknowledge receipt of a report regarding quarterly progress on RTC Agency Goals and Strategic Roadmap - FY 2024 (Q2). (For Possible Action)

On motion of Commissioner Reese to approve agenda, seconded by Commissioner Garcia, which motion unanimously carried, Chair Lawson ordered that the consent items for this meeting be approved.

Item 5 PUBLIC HEARING

- 5.1 Adopt a resolution approving an agreement for the exchange of property owned by RTC (a fee simple interest in APN 004-061-28, and a permanent access and utility easement over APN 004-061-20, 004-061-26, 004-061-22, 035-033-02) for property owned by the Truckee Meadows Water Authority (a fee simple interest in APN 140-051-23). (For Possible Action)
 - a. Staff Presentation
 - b. Public Hearing
 - c. Action

Dale Keller, RTC Engineering Director, the RTC acquired these parcels between 1989 and 2004, related to the Clear Acre/Sutro Interchange project. We completed the work and these RTC parcels are no longer needed. The areas that will be exchanged with TMWA are shown on the presentation. This is a general exhibit, but the legals and exhibits are shown in the agenda packet.

In exchange, the RTC will be receiving the area shown in blue on the far right of the presentation as part of an upcoming Geiger Grade Realignment/Toll Road Extension project. There is a full simple acquisition for this APN, and the road parallels and connects into Geiger Grade, which we will be looking into for improving the connections in the south part of town.

RTC and TMWA have finalized the terms of the property exchange agreement attached to this resolution, so following this public hearing, the adoption of this resolution will approve the agreement and satisfy the requirements per NRS.

There were no questions from the commission at this time.

Chair Lawson opened the item up for public comment, being none, we'll bring it back to the dais and we're looking for a motion.

On motion of Vice Chair Hill to approve, seconded by Commissioner Reese, which motion unanimously carried, Chair Lawson ordered the item be approved.

- 5.2 Conduct a public hearing on proposed service changes as recommended by the Fiscal Year 2025 Transit Optimization Plan Strategies (TOPS) document for RTC RIDE and FlexRIDE beginning on or after May 4, 2024; approve the recommended service changes. (For Possible Action)
- a. Staff Presentation
 - b. Public Hearing
 - c. Action

James Gee, Public Transportation Operations Director, quickly outlined the service changes proposed on the presentation for this year. The first change is a very simple routing change on Route 13. This change was suggested by our Keolis Safety Team and it is to avoid the parking at Grove and Harvard near Costco, which gets very congested and it makes a very difficult left hand turn for our drivers.

There are also some miscellaneous increases to service for Route 21, which connects Centennial Plaza in Sparks to the Legends area. We will have increased frequency on Sundays, moving from every 60 minutes to every 30 minutes. This is based upon ridership and demands from passengers.

The Virginia Line will have extended high frequency service later in the evening going from 7:00 where it is today to approximately 9:30pm, to accommodate shoppers and people that work at Meadowood Mall and also work later and want to take advantage of the Virginia Line.

To address customer service issues, we are physically assigning bus bays at Meadowood Mall, to make it easier for customers to navigate to correct bus connections.

We also looked at our level of service for each of the holidays listed on the chart. We are changing the level of service for those days from a weekend schedule to a normal weekday service schedule to accommodate people who do not get those days off of work.

Our biggest change is the creation of a fourth FlexRIDE zone, this zone will serve the South Meadows and Damonte Ranch with connections to the Summit on the south and to Meadowood Mall in the north, with additional connections at Walmart, Raley's at Galena, UNR Redfield Campus, Northern Nevada Medical Center Sierra Campus, Meadowood Mall and several others.

Vice Chair Hill, these are great changes and are things that the Board have asked for and just thank you for these changes. On Route 13, did we go to any of our Committees for that change?

James Gee, all of these changes went through the TAC and CMAC Committees. Route 13 doesn't miss any bus stops, it actually adds a bus stop at Linden and Grove.

Chair Lawson, how do we address Earl's public comment on FlexRIDE. Do we have enough drivers?

James Gee, we are always looking, we could use more, but what we do when we are short on drivers is we outsource to Uber and Lyft. We have in-house mechanisms that automatically pushes those trips to Uber and Lyft when there is a more than a 30 minuet wait for FlexRIDE.

Chair Lawson opened the item up for public comment, being none, we'll bring it back to the dais and we're looking for a motion.

On motion of Vice Chair Hill to approve, seconded by Commissioner Reese, which motion unanimously carried, Chair Lawson ordered the item be approved.

Item 6 *REPORTS (Informational Only)*

6.1 *RTC Executive Director Report*

- We recently held two events in the North Valleys.
 - The first was a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the completion of the Sky Vista Widening Rehabilitation Project.
 - This was an important project that made a lot of improvements for drivers, cyclists, and pedestrians – including a roundabout.
 - This was a 17.7 million-dollar investment in the community, using Regional Road Impact Fees – so we accomplished this without using fuel tax dollars.
 - The other event was the first public meeting for the Lemmon Drive Safety and Resiliency Project.
 - Around 60 people including local media attended the meeting to discuss the future of this important corridor.
 - As you know, we have a lot of plans in the North Valleys, so these discussions are very valuable as we move forward.
- According to the Transit App, the RTC has the fastest-growing user base on the app – with a 350 percent growth, in the past year.
 - We launched the app, last January.
 - We added 970 active users in the first month.
 - Last month, that grew to nearly 34-hundred users and we expect that to continue to rise.
 - The Transit App is an easy and convenient way for our customers to buy their bus passes, and we've received a lot of positive feedback on it.
- Once again, we will provide free transit on all of our services for St. Patrick's Day, March 17th.
 - The free service will run from 4 o'clock in the afternoon to 2 o'clock in the morning.
 - This will give all of our residents a safe option to get from place to place, especially if they plan on drinking.
- We recently partnered with Safe Routes to School on the First Annual Pedestrian Safety Message Poster Contest.
 - Our staff selected the three top posters from all ages in the Washoe County School District – which we enlarged into three different bus wraps.
 - The 1st place winner is Anna Yunqing from Peavine Elementary School and her poster is on the bus outside.
 - 2nd Place goes to Ricardo Marquez from Desert Heights Elementary School. 3rd Place goes to Jaelynn Vicente of Depoali Middle School.
 - Each winner's school will have an assembly next week, where they will get to see their artwork displayed on our bus.

- Safe Routes to School and Blue Zone Sports are also providing these students with an iPad and a bike, so congratulations to these kids.
- As you know, some other public agencies are interested in using this room for their public meetings.
 - Our staff has worked to develop a pilot policy to permit TMRPA and TMWA to use the Great Room for these meetings.
 - Due to the need for I.T. network security, we will charge for the use of this room when agencies need to use our meeting broadcast capabilities.
 - Between the RTC, TMRPA, and TMWA's meeting needs, this room will be very busy most days.
 - We'll keep you posted on how the room-sharing works out.
- I am pleased to introduce you to our newest employee, Trisha Starkey.
 - Trisha joined Agency Services as an Administrative Associate Tuesday.
 - Her background includes operating her own flower farm and floral design company. She also worked with the City of Fernley as a Financial Administrative Specialist, served as patient liaison in a medical office, and worked in banking.
 - Welcome to the team, Trisha!
- I would also like to congratulate Marquis Williams on his one-year anniversary.
 - Marquis started with the RTC as a Senior Technical Planner February 6th, last year.
 - Thank you, Marquis for your hard work and we look forward to many more years with you onboard, helping us plan the future of our community.
- Please join us in congratulating Daryl Berkley as the MTM employee of the month for January.
 - Daryl has driven for ACCESS for four-and-a-half years
 - He says the passengers make it a great place to work.
 - The customers really like Daryl and he receives positive feedback all the time.
 - He has an excellent safety record and you can always count on him to show up to work every day on time.
 - Outside of work he is a gamer and he enjoys Rock concerts like G3 and Cheap Trick, here locally.
- The Keolis Driver of the Month is Merrill Gibson.
 - Merrill was born in Mexico and grew up in Phoenix before moving up here to Reno.
 - He has worked as a bus operator for RIDE since September of 2020.
 - His on-time performance was 95 percent in January with zero preventable accidents.
 - Merrill enjoys spending time with his family and traveling.
- Finally, we brought Celtis Ventures on board to handle our TOPS Marketing Plan.
 - They're in town to get the ball rolling and to learn more about our transit system and community.

Welcome Devon Cichoski, Project Manager and Sandra Gonzalez.

Devon Cichoski, thank you everyone, we are really excited to be here. We've spent the last few days in town touring all of the offices, facilities and the town in general, and everyone has been great. We will be looking at your customer communications and your brand and how you are applying that, not just online or in any one touch-point, but as a journey across the system. We look at how the customer moves through your system, how are they seeing all of the different things that the RTC puts out to the public. Is that journey seamless? Do you know where you are going and what services the RTC offers?

We are always on the lookout for better ideas for campaigns, how to promote your services, reach out to customers. So, at the end of this visit we will be putting together a communications audit, compiling

all of our findings and then we'll use that to make any suggestions or updates to your marketing plan. That will really guide our work together going forward for the next 3-5 years as we roll out the TOPS Marketing Plan.

We are really focused on Spanish language marketing, that is a specialty of Sandra's, she's put a lot of work in that area and one of her campaigns just won an APTA Award.

6.2 RTC Federal Report

Paul Nelson, RTC Government Affairs Officer. Both houses of Congress are on their President's Day weekend and they plan to return February 26th. That will give them about a week to get their appropriations bills passed before the March 1 and March 8 deadlines. They think they're on course to pass these bills, but they don't have an agreement in place yet. If they push the timeline past April or if they keep the spending flat through October 1, then there would be some automatic cuts that would kick in.

We are in the process of submitting some of our congressionally directed spending. We have six project requests that we're working on now, each in the amount of between \$1 million to \$5 million in Reno, Sparks and Washoe County. We'll have those submitted soon and hopefully we'll have an answer before too long.

The FTA is making recommendations for improving bus procurement in a few different ways. These include more standardized buses, with fewer customizations to speed up production. It is also trying to strengthen the bus manufacturing industry, reduce contract costs and to shorten deliver times.

Finally, we are looking at some climate pollutions reduction grants. These would use federal dollars that we could apply to reduce emissions in our community. Some of the things that we're really focusing on is trying to get bus ridership up to take people out of their cars.

6.3 NDOT Director Report

NDOT Deputy Director Sajid Sulahria gave a presentation and started off announcing a promotion benefiting our local NDOT Operations District 2. Bhupinder Sandhu has served as acting District Engineer over recent months and now he has been promoted to District Engineer. At District 2, he will oversee our highway maintenance and construction activities across northwestern Nevada. He has been with the Department 18 years and he has moved up in the ranks as a Construction Resident Engineer, overseeing many of our regional construction projects. Congratulations Bhupinder!

Updates were given on the following:

- US 395 North Valleys Northbound Lane Reductions.
- NDOT Vacancy Rates.
- US 50 Tahoe East Shore Corridor Management Plan for Public Review. Please visit our website at www.dot.nv.gov/us50eastshore.
- Critical Hires during Winter Months.

Item 7 COMMISSIONER ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPDATES

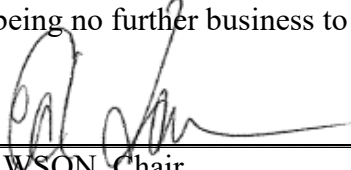
There were no commissioner announcements or updates.

Item 8 PUBLIC INPUT

Chair Lawson 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. There being no one wishing to speak, Chair Lawson moved to Adjournment.

Item 9 ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 8:36 a.m.



ED LAWSON, Chair
Regional Transportation Commission

****Copies of all presentations are available by contacting Michelle Kraus at mkraus@rtcwashoe.com.**