



## Transit Advisory Committee Minutes for Thursday, February 4, 2020

NOTE: IN ACCORDANCE WITH PROVISIONS OF THE ARIZONA REVISED STATUTES THE SUMMARIZED MINUTES OF NAIPTA TAC MEETINGS ARE NOT VERBATIM TRANSCRIPTS. ONLY THE ACTIONS TAKEN AND DISCUSSION APPEARING WITHIN QUOTATION MARKS ARE VERBATIM. AUDIO RECORDINGS OF NAIPTA TAC MEETINGS ARE ON FILE IN THE NAIPTA CLERK'S OFFICE.

The Transit Advisory Committee met in Regular Session on Thursday, February 4, 2021 at 10:00am in a WEB BASED meeting. Members of the TAC attended by telephone or internet conferencing. Mountain Line staff were present in the Mountain Line Training Room, 3825 N. Kaspar Dr., Flagstaff, AZ 86004. The public was invited to observe by online streaming.

### *TAC MEMBERS PRESENT:*

Erin Stam, (Chair), Director of Parking and Shuttle Services, NAU, designee, (Zoom);  
Shane Dille, (Vice Chair), Deputy City Manager, City of Flagstaff, designee, (Zoom);  
Gillian Thomas, Citizen Representative, Coconino County, (Zoom);  
Kevin Parkes, Citizen Representative, City of Flagstaff, alternate, (Zoom);  
Kurt Stull, Executive Director of Facilities and Security, CCC, designee, (Zoom);  
Dave Wessel, Planning Manager, MetroPlan, (Zoom), joined at approximately 10:03am;  
Gail Jackson, Economic Development Representative, ECoNA, (Zoom), joined at approximately 10:02am;  
Clarreese Green, Vice President of Academics, ASNAU, designee, (Zoom)  
*\*Five of our eight TAC member seats must be present to constitute a quorum.*

### *TAC MEMBERS EXCUSED:*

Lucinda Andreani, Deputy County Manager, Coconino County, designee;  
Christopher Tressler, County Engineer, Coconino County, alternate

### *STAFF IN ATTENDANCE:*

Heather Dalmolin, CEO and General Manager, (Zoom);  
Kate Morley, Deputy General Manager, (Zoom);  
Lauree Battice, Management Services Director, (Zoom);  
Sam Short, Safety Manager, (Zoom);  
Bizzy Collins, Transit Planner, (Zoom);  
Robert Martinez, Technical Specialist;  
Rhonda Cashman, Executive Assistant and Clerk of the Board;  
Mitesh Patel, Mountain Line Legal Counsel, (Zoom)

### *GUESTS PRESENT:*

Rick Tadder, Management Services Director, City of Flagstaff, (Zoom)

1. CALL TO ORDER -Chair Stam called the meeting to order at approximately 10:01am.
2. ROLL CALL





## Mountain Line

3773 N. Kaspar Drive · Flagstaff, AZ 86004 · 928-679-8900 · FAX 928-779-6868 · www.mountainline.az.gov

Chair Stam recommended attendees and presenters turn on their video when speaking to create a stronger sense of engagement and because we have not seen each other in so long.

### 3. SAFETY MINUTE

-Sam Short, Safety Manager

Mr. Short reported excessive sitting can lead to health risks. It is important to try to stand when possible throughout the workday and to try to exercise before and after work as our bodies are designed for movement.

### 4. APPROVE TAC MINUTES 1/7/2021

Vice Chair Dille moved to approve the minutes from January 7, 2021. Advisor Stull seconded. There was no discussion. All approved, none opposed. Motion carried.

NAME	YES VOTE	NO VOTE
Erin Stam	X	
Shane Dille	X	
Gillian Thomas	X	
Dave Wessel	X	
Kevin Parkes	X	
Kurt Stull	X	
Gail Jackson	X	

### 5. REVIEW OF THE DRAFT BOARD BUSINESS AGENDA

The TAC reviewed the draft Board Business Agenda and discussed staff reports, in order to provide recommendations to the Board. Specific comments and recommendations are noted in these minutes.

Chair Stam noted a change to the agenda. She requested the Route 8 Extension progress report be move to discussion/action items at the end of the Discussion/Action section.

#### a. **DISCUSSION / ACTION ITEMS:**

##### i. CONSIDER AND APPROVE THE SECOND FY2021 BUDGET REVISION

-Heather Dalmolin, CEO and General Manager

Staff requests the Board of Directors approve the Second FY2021 Budget Revision for a total change not to exceed \$40,438.88 to move 50% of delayed wage adjustment for exempt staff effective January 1, 2021 from contingency to wages and employee related expenses (ERE).

Ms. Dalmolin stated this item is follow up for the FY2021 budget. She shared a PowerPoint presentation with the TAC including the history of why funds were held in contingency, the scheduled Board action, and the current status of the Transit Tax revenue projections. Vice Chair Dille asked if customer fares were lost during COVID-19. Ms. Dalmolin responded that Mountain Line lost approximately \$500,000 in fare revenue due to fare free operations over

*Getting you where you want to go*





## Mountain Line

3773 N. Kaspar Drive · Flagstaff, AZ 86004 · 928-679-8900 · FAX 928-779-6868 · [www.mountainline.az.gov](http://www.mountainline.az.gov)

several months of the pandemic. She explained Mountain Line received \$7.2 million in the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act funding which is being used to offset the loss of fares versus the Transit Tax revenue. Vice Chair Dille suggested sharing this information to provide the Board with the whole financial picture. There was no further discussion.

ii. ARIZONA PUBLIC SERVICE (APS) RATE STRUCTURE AND ELECTRIC BUSES

-Bizzy Collins, Transit Planner

This item is for information and discussion only.

Ms. Collins reported the Zero Emission Bus (ZEB) Transition Plan was adopted last month by the Board. The ZEB Plan identified increased costs for battery-electric buses, a known factor when the policy directive was adopted. The first slide in her PowerPoint presentation illustrated a chart reflective of electricity (fuel) costs with peak demand charges. Ms. Collins noted that if Mountain Line can reduce the cost to charge an electric fleet by 30 percent, cost to charge the vehicles will be equal to the current costs of operating our hybrid-electric buses. The transition will have infrastructure requirements and the cost of the buses, approximately \$250,000 more for each bus. She stated this discussion aligns with the Arizona Statewide Transportation Electrification (AZTE) Plan, addressing full spectrum transportation and there is an expectation for a transit related recommendation. The third and final workshop for the AZTE Plan will be on February 10<sup>th</sup>, at which time there will be a presentation to the Arizona Corporation Commission (ACC). The ACC will determine if there will be any changes made to the rate structure. Additionally, an Arizona Transit Association (AzTA) Electric Bus Group has been formed. The goal of this group is to reduce costs of electrification for transit agencies statewide, related to both charging the vehicles and the infrastructure required to support electric vehicles. The group will evaluate the most effective path forward. More information will be available at the next Board meeting. Vice Chair Dille asked about electric buses being feasible in Flagstaff. Ms. Collins explained the ZEB Plan did identify electric vehicles will work in Flagstaff and the on-route charging provides the most flexibility. The Board of Directors has indicated support for green, clean battery-electric buses as related to responding to the City's climate action plan. Bus purchases will be completed as vehicles need to be replaced since it is the most financially feasible approach and recognizes the useful life of our existing fleet. At this time, two electric buses are funded and next month staff will have an opportunity to apply for infrastructure funding. The idea is to use the first two buses as a pilot to test them in real time, in our community. Chair Stam noted most agencies are asking similar questions regarding feasibility in the community and charging cost concerns. NAU is also considering similar decisions and Ms. Stam has been invited to these conversations. There was no further discussion.

iii. UPDATE ON THE BUS RAPID TRANSIT (BRT) PROJECT IN RELATIONSHIP TO THE MILTON CORRIDOR MASTER PLAN

-Bizzy Collins, Transit Planner

This item is for information and discussion only.

Ms. Collins noted the BRT project development phase kicked off in 2018. As a reminder, BRT is a toolbox of improvements to help buses be more competitive with cars. BRT is

*Getting you where you want to go*





## Mountain Line

3773 N. Kaspar Drive · Flagstaff, AZ 86004 · 928-679-8900 · FAX 928-779-6868 · [www.mountainline.az.gov](http://www.mountainline.az.gov)

eligible for a unique source of funding, the Capital Investment Grant (CIG), which could have dramatic impact for transit, bikes, and pedestrians in the area where the BRT would operate. The Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) Milton Corridor Master Plan (CMP) kicked off in 2017; Ms. Collins shared a map illustrating where these two projects overlap for 1.5 miles on Milton Road. ADOT recently conducted the public outreach portion of the CMP and the final top ranking option was Alternative 5 which offered exciting improvements for the corridor. The second top ranking alternative was No Build Hybrid with spot improvements. ADOT's likely recommendation will be the second option based on travel time impacts for cars in the corridor (none of the ADOT alternatives offered significant time savings for transit operations), and strong opposition to right-of-way (ROW) impacts. Specific spot improvements such as pedestrian crossing and Transit Signal Prioritization (TSP) may offer a few multimodal improvements to find balance that would not impact property along the corridor. Project partners are anticipated to support the No Build Hybrid. Mountain Line needs to know which spot improvements are being considered as the CIG grant opportunity for the BRT would require TSP. If sidewalk, pedestrian crossings, and bike lanes are all that can be done, it is really a bike and pedestrian project for partners to match locally versus a transit project. Staff will be considering action on how to proceed with the BRT project in light of this recommendation. Advisor Wessel complimented Ms. Collins, stating she captured the implications to the BRT very well. He stated the City is looking at zoning standards on Milton Road with redevelopment over time. He offered some technical considerations that may make improvements functional, but probably not comfortable. Advisor Thomas asked about the involvement of the City's Bike and Pedestrian committees. Ms. Collins confirmed those committees have been involved, but that ADOT will not be seeking approval from stakeholder agencies or committees. There was no further discussion.

### vi. REVIEW MOUNTAIN LINE SERVICE REQUIREMENTS AND FUNDING STRUCTURE

-Heather Dalmolin, CEO and General Manager

The Board may provide direction, but there is no recommendation from staff at this time.

Ms. Dalmolin reported she would be offering presentations over the next three months on education pieces that may be particularly helpful for new Board members. The effort will begin with Service Requirements and Financial Management Practices.

Paratransit service is a federal requirement where Fixed Route service is offered. Paratransit is an expensive service and staff continue to strategize on how to reduce the cost of this program. The Taxi Travel program is a less expensive option with added flexibility. A stored value card is offered to people who would otherwise qualify for paratransit and the card can be used for payment for taxi and other shared ride services. During COVID-19, more participants are electing to use the Taxi Travel program over paratransit services. Eligibility for these programs is based on an individual's ability to navigate the fixed route system and is vetted through an application and approval process. Microtransit may be another option in the future and staff could look to interline these services to create more efficiency and cost savings for paratransit.

Switching over to Financial Management Practices, Ms. Dalmolin confirmed that Mountain Line has three main funding sources: federal, local, and fares. Financial decisions and

*Getting you where you want to go*





## Mountain Line

3773 N. Kaspar Drive · Flagstaff, AZ 86004 · 928-679-8900 · FAX 928-779-6868 · [www.mountainline.az.gov](http://www.mountainline.az.gov)

practices are set by the Financial Management Plan that was updated in 2019, including the addition of internal controls. There are three budget presentation opportunities prior to the needed approval in June of each year. Our federal funding is received on a reimbursement basis and as a result the City of Flagstaff deposits one-fourth of the annual operating to assist with cash flow needs. We receive some federal pass-thru funding from the State of Arizona, also as a reimbursement post expense. Mountain Line and City staff meet quarterly to review financial and performance information. Performance reports are presented to the Board on a quarterly basis and include a look at financial as well as system performance measures. Staff are working on a Strategic Investment Plan (SIP) and the Five-Year Transit Plan, one or both may impact how the financial plan looks or is used, as well as what performance measures are used going forward. The Transit Tax projections are provided by the City, typically on a five-year outlook, and Mountain Line projects an additional five years to reach a total of a ten year projection. Financial planning is done internally. Quarterly reports are completed for both the Federal Transit Administration and Arizona Department of Transportation Multimodal Division. Chair Stam commented on this report being a good overview for those not familiar with Mountain Line financial practices and she thanked Ms. Dalmolin for providing this information. Vice Chair Dille communicated his appreciation for this report.

v. ROUTE 8 EXTENSION

-Bizzy Collins, Transit Planner

This item is for information and discussion only.

This item was originally a progress report and was pulled for discussion at the request of staff. Ms. Morley stated the Board has long supported Mountain Line staff trying to get private development to buy into transit. The City process does not afford Mountain Line a seat at the table early on in the development process and then it is difficult to negotiate during Planning and Zoning and City Council meetings at the dais. This discussion is to affirm if the Board still wants staff to pursue private developer buy in and if so, seek direction on avenues to pursue with the City of Flagstaff. There was a lengthy discussion about previous conversations with City staff on the process, the need for a fundamental shift since Mountain Line is the transit provider for the City as mandated by citizen vote, the role of public transit with regard to affordable housing and climate action goals, as well as competing priorities for developers and the need to be on the same page with City staff. TAC members support Mountain Line and City staff holding further discussions to agree on a path forward.

**b. PROGRESS REPORTS:**

i. ROUTE 8 EXTENSION

-Bizzy Collins, Transit Planner

Chair Stam pulled this item for discussion as item 5.a.v.

ii. SUMMARY OF CURRENT EVENTS

-Heather Dalmolin, CEO and General Manager

*Getting you where you want to go*







## Mountain Line

3773 N. Kaspar Drive · Flagstaff, AZ 86004 · 928-679-8900 · FAX 928-779-6868 · [www.mountainline.az.gov](http://www.mountainline.az.gov)

Ms. Dalmolin spoke to some current event items:

- Regarding the COVID-19 vaccine, other essential workers are not eligible yet, but staff are encouraged to pursue the vaccine if they fit into one of the current groups. Initially Coconino County Health and Human Services agreed to prioritize transit operators, but the Center for Disease Control (CDC) changed the criteria and they have been grouped with “other essential workers.”
- Recently operations experienced a 20 percent shortage in staff and staff are starting to see burnout.
- Staff have been working on the requirements to comply with the federal mask mandate as it supersedes the City proclamation. So far there have been no incidents.
- Service kept running during the recent snow event and staff were recognized for their efforts.
- The City of Flagstaff received grant funding from Northern Arizona Council of Governments (NACOG) for environmental studies for three Downtown Connection Center (DCC) parcels.
- Staff have requested future COVID relief funding follow the standard formula funding apportionment. No transit system in Arizona received any funds from the second round of COVID relief funding.
- Several staff members have achieved years of service milestones and are being celebrated.

### ITEMS FROM COMMITTEE AND STAFF:

#### 6. SCHEDULE NEXT MEETING DATE AND IDENTIFY AGENDA ITEMS

March/April Working Agenda

The next TAC meeting will be March 4, 2021 and it will be a Zoom meeting based in Flagstaff in the Mountain Line Training Room, 3773 N. Kaspar Dr., Flagstaff, AZ 86004 at 10am. The public is invited to attend. March agenda items may include but not be limited to the FY2020 Financial Audit Report, Low or No Emission Program Grant, Bus Stop Improvement Report/New Job Order, Bus Rapid Transit (BRT (Report), Board Education Opportunity, Quarterly Performance Report, Downtown Connection Center (DCC) Update, and Delegation of Authority Updates. The March agenda will be available for review on Mountain Line’s website and at Mountain Line’s public posting places (listed on the Mountain Line website) at least 24 hours prior to the meeting and should be consulted for a list of items that will come before the TAC.

#### 7. ADJOURNMENT -Chair Stam adjourned the meeting at approximately 11:29am.

---

Erin Stam, Chair of the Mountain Line Transit Advisory Committee

ATTEST:

---

Rhonda Cashman, Executive Assistant and Clerk of the Board

*Getting you where you want to go*

