

Mountain Line

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Board of Directors Minutes for Wednesday, April 16, 2025

NOTE: IN ACCORDANCE WITH PROVISIONS OF THE ARIZONA REVISED STATUTES THE SUMMARIZED MINUTES OF NAIPTA BOARD MEETINGS ARE NOT VERBATIM TRANSCRIPTS. ONLY THE ACTIONS TAKEN AND DISCUSSION APPEARING WITHIN QUOTATION MARKS ARE VERBATIM.

The Board of Directors met in Regular Session on Wednesday, April 16, 2025, at 10:00am in the Mountain Line VERA Room, 3773 N. Kaspar Dr., Flagstaff, AZ 86004. This was a WEB BASED meeting. Members of the Board and Mountain Line staff attended in person, by internet conferencing, or by telephone. The public was invited to attend.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Jeronimo Vasquez, (Chair), Board of Supervisors, Coconino County;
Josh Maher, (Vice Chair), Associate VP for Community Relations, NAU, designee, (Zoom);
Tony Williams, Vice President of Student Services, CCC, designee, (Zoom);
Miranda Sweet, Vice Mayor, City of Flagstaff;
Lori Matthews, City Councilor, City of Flagstaff, (Zoom), left at approximately 12:02pm
**Three of our five Board member seats must be present to constitute a quorum.*
***The City of Flagstaff holds two seats.*

BOARD MEMBERS EXCUSED:

None.

MOUNTAIN LINE STAFF IN ATTENDANCE:

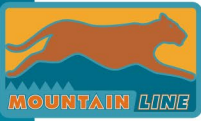
Heather Dalmolin, CEO and General Manager, (Zoom);
Jacki Lenner, Deputy General Manager, (Zoom) left at approximately 10:35am;
Sam Short, Workforce Director, In Person, then (Zoom) joined at approximately 10:19am and left at approximately 11:07am;
Randy Sherping, Operations Director, (Zoom), left at approximately 11:07am;
Josh Stone, Financial Manager, (Zoom), left at approximately 11:07am;
Jeremiah McVicker, Maintenance Superintendent, (Zoom), left at approximately 11:07am;
Codi Weaver, Human Resources Manager, left at approximately 11:07am;
Heather Higgins, Purchasing and Contracts Officer, (Zoom), left at approximately 11:07am;
Bizzy Collins, Strategic Performance Planner, left at approximately 11:07am;
LaReina Reyes, Associate Transit Planner, (Zoom), left at approximately 11:07am;
Jon Matthies, IT Manager, left at approximately 11:09am and returned at approximately 12:04pm;
Rhonda Cashman, Executive Assistant and Clerk of the Board;
Scott Holcomb, Mountain Line Attorney, (Zoom)

GUESTS PRESENT:

Tiffany Antol, Zoning Code Manager, City of Flagstaff, left at approximately 10:25am;
Judy Begay, Board of Supervisors, Coconino County, alternate, (Zoom);
Jeff McKay, Vice President for Capital Planning and Campus Operations, NAU, alternate, (Zoom), joined at approximately 10:03am;

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Jenny Niemann, Climate Action Section Director, City of Flagstaff, (Zoom), joined at approximately 10:11am and left at approximately 10:25am;

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

2. ROLL CALL

3. SAFETY MINUTE
-Sam Short, Workforce Director

Mr. Short provided a bike safety report since National Bike Month is coming in May.

4. MILESTONE ANNIVERSARIES
-Heather Dalmolin, CEO and General Manager

Ms. Dalmolin recognized the April milestone anniversary.

5. CALL TO THE PUBLIC

There were no members of the public online or in the room requesting to speak. A written public comment was received via email related to the Free Fare Transit Update agenda item. It will be read into the record at that time.

6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:
 - a. Regular Meeting 3/19/2025
 - b. Special Meeting 3/25/2025

Director Sweet made a motion to approve the minutes for the March 19, 2025 and the March 25, 2025 meetings. Director Matthews seconded. There was no discussion. All approved, none opposed. Motion carried.

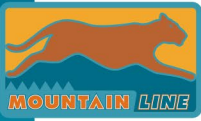
NAME	YES VOTE	NO VOTE
Jeronimo Vasquez	X	
Josh Maher	X	
Tony Williams	X	
Miranda Sweet	X	
Lori Matthews	X	

CONSENT AGENDA

All matters under the Consent Agenda are considered by the Board of Directors to be routine and will be enacted by a single motion APPROVING THE CONSENT AGENDA. If discussion is desired on any particular consent item, that item will be removed from the consent agenda and will be considered separately. All items on the Consent Agenda with financial impact have been budgeted.

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7. THE METROPLAN AND MOUNTAIN LINE COORDINATED PUBLIC TRANSIT – HUMAN SERVICES TRANSPORTATION PLAN

-LaReina Reyes, Associate Transit Planner

Staff recommends the Board of Directors adopt the MetroPlan and Mountain Line Coordinated Public Transit - Human Services Transportation Plan.

Director Williams made a motion to approve The Coordinated Plan. Director Sweet seconded. There was no discussion. All approved, none opposed. Motion carried.

NAME	YES VOTE	NO VOTE
Jeronimo Vasquez	X	
Josh Maher	X	
Tony Williams	X	
Miranda Sweet	X	
Lori Matthews	X	

DISCUSSION / ACTION ITEMS:

8. LAND AVAILABILITY AND SITE SUITABILITY STUDY, CODE ANALYSIS PROJECT

-Bizzy Collins, Strategic Performance Planner

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

Ms. Antol stated that staff are through with the majority of the work on this project. She shared that the purpose of this project is related to the City's 10-Year Housing Plan and Carbon Neutrality Plan Goals. She noted the Land Availability and Site Suitability Study (LASS) has been completed and the Code Analysis Project (CAP) Code Diagnostic Report has been done. She communicated that now staff are focusing on Code Concepts to address the highest priority barriers. She shared that after further public outreach, the final code recommendations will be considered. She explained there is a project website on which the reports mentioned can be accessed and there are dates listed for future public outreach opportunities, as well as contact emails for staff. She noted that presentations have been done recently for the Housing and Sustainability Commissions, if anyone wants to watch the recordings.

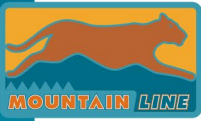
Ms. Collins shared the two phases of the CAP: Phase 1, current phase of the project, provides key outcomes and transit considerations; and Phase 2, integrates transit into code. She noted the three parts to the Transit-Related Codes Assessment are Infill Development and Compact Land Use Patterns, Sustainable Transportation Networks and Neighborhoods, and Electric Mobility. She stated the goal is to make transit the easy choice. She communicated that she plans to co-present with City staff at the future public outreach events. Director Sweet commented that she is pleased to see transit in the conversation.

9. JULY 2025 SERVICE CHANGES

-Jacki Lenners, Deputy General Manager

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Staff recommends the Board of Directors conduct a public hearing and close a public comment period for the proposed July 2025 service enhancements. Staff also recommends the Board of Directors approve the recommended service changes for implementation in July 2025.

Ms. Lenners stated the August services changes became the July services changes due to the start dates of the local schools starting the first week of August, pushing our service changes to the last week in July. She reviewed a summary of the comments received regarding each route's proposed service changes.

Route 2: She noted the eastbound route will serve the mesa every trip, and the westbound route will not serve the mesa at all. She explained there were two comments regarding their student's ability to get home after school. Ms. Lenners stated she will contact these parents to let them know of the other nearby bus stops available to their child(ren). She noted running this route westbound when it has to backtrack through traffic to the main road causes other riders to miss their connections and get significantly behind on timing. She communicated a feasibility study is planned for evaluating a left turn off the mesa at Pine Cliff as the long term goal is to serve this area in both directions.

Route 4/14: She stated there is a new roundabout and bus only lanes on Beulah Boulevard, so the plan is to move two stops off the congested Milton Road and make the route more efficient. There were no comments.

Route 5: She noted there were a lot of positive comments received about increasing frequency on this route.

Route 7: She stated that after conversations with City staff, Mountain Line staff have decided not to move this stop as proposed. She reported there were no safety concerns from the City standpoint. She shared that there is a plan for a corridor study to be done which may inform additional changes within the corridor in the future. Chair Vasquez asked about increasing the amenities at bus stop 16. She noted that the right of way does not allow any upgrades. She explained this bus stop will be detoured during the construction of the roundabout in this area.

Route 8: She shared that there were lots of positive comments received regarding the extension of this route and many hoping that the route will extend even further in the future. She noted the proposed six new bus stops are pending the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) permit approval; these bus stops are temporary due to infrastructure needs in this corridor. She explained there are some safety concerns in this corridor and a marketing campaign will be done to recommend riding the bus around versus crossing West Route 66. She noted the plan is to extend the route further in the future due to the development in the area.

Director Williams made a motion to close the public comment period and approve the service changes as presented. Director Sweet seconded. There was no discussion. All approved, none opposed. Motion carried.

NAME	YES VOTE	NO VOTE
Jeronimo Vasquez	X	
Josh Maher	X	
Tony Williams	X	
Miranda Sweet	X	
Lori Matthews	X	

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10. FY2026 CAPITAL BUDGET

-Josh Stone, Financial Manager

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

Mr. Stone noted this is the third presentation in a series to break down the expenses of the proposed FY2026 budget. He shared that the total capital budget is more than \$45 million, of which \$38 million will be carried forward from FY2025, and almost \$8 million for new projects. He explained that there is a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) in which projects are identified and evaluated. He briefly reviewed the various projects included in the proposed FY2026 budget: First Mile Last Mile, which is a partnership with the City; the Downtown Connection Center (DCC) Building, Phase 1, is nearing completion with Phase 2, design and interim construction to be done before the Rio de Flag construction; the Kaspar Maintenance Facility will redevelop the current buildings for the safety and comfort of our mechanics when working on 60-foot buses; four hybrid electric replacement buses have been ordered with expected delivery in late 2026; bus stop coordination with developers and potentially \$3 million for a Congressionally Directed Spending award for which there is a placeholder in the budget if received; a Fare Collection System Update; and a Capital Asset Inventory Management System. There were no questions.

11. FREE FARE TRANSIT UPDATE

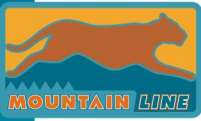
-Heather Dalmolin, CEO and General Manager

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

Ms. Dalmolin shared that this agenda item is being brought back at the request of Board members and the staff report provides the history of this conversation. She noted that when originally discussing the possibility of free fare for our system, our fare collection was at approximately \$530,000 that year and now it is at approximately \$800,000; fare revenues are increasing as our ridership is returning and growing. She communicated that when the decision was made not to include fare replacement in the transit tax, and the decision was made not to move forward with free fare, staff were directed to expand the Reduced Fare Program to create a more accessible transit system. She explained that staff have worked with Arizona Veteran's Home to implement reduced fares for veterans and military personnel from any branch; they can bring in the appropriate documentation and a completed application to qualify. She said staff are still working on a way to identify those that may qualify for low income; staff are talking with the County Health and Human Services staff, proposing they qualify the individual and then they advise Mountain Line staff. She stated she is hopeful the low income program can roll out by July 1st. She mentioned that staff and the public will need to be educated about these changes to the program. In summary, she did not recommend changing the fare program; free fare was not accounted for in the transit tax measure due to planned system expansion. She also noted that many systems that went free fare are now rolling back as it has hurt their funding opportunities. She stated this item could be revisited at some point in the future. Vice Chair Maher asked what portion fares are of revenues. Ms. Dalmolin responded that fare collection and pass sales are approximately 800,000, which does not include the Northern Arizona University (NAU) payment in lieu of fares. Director Matthews commented that for the same reason we did not add free fare to the transit tax, it would be

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difficult to move to fare free because voters might feel misled; she supports the expansion of the reduced fare program and felt free fare would be problematic. Director Sweet stated her thoughts were in line with others and it's okay for now, but she would like to continue the conversation in the future. Ms. Dalmolin asked if a once a year check-in would be sufficient. Board members supported that timeline; however, Chair Vasquez would like to be able to share the reason why Mountain Line cannot move to free fare, due to budget constraints, etc. Ms. Dalmolin shared that through Chair Vasquez's office contact, and Vice Chair Maher's interactions with a group of students at NAU, she was able to have a discussion with a few members, build a relationship and create respect, and provide the students with an understanding of the reasons behind not moving to free fare. Ms. Cashman read the public comment provided via email regarding free fare and it will be attached to the minutes as a public record. There was no further discussion.

PROGRESS REPORTS:

There were no questions regarding the progress reports.

12. MOUNTAIN EXPRESS PERFORMANCE REPORT

-Bizzy Collins, Strategic Performance Planner

13. DELEGATIONS OF AUTHORITY

-Heather Dalmolin, CEO and General Manager

14. SUMMARY OF CURRENT EVENTS

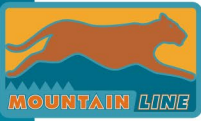
-Heather Dalmolin, CEO and General Manager

Ms. Dalmolin shared the following highlights:

- Ridership is growing, by an average of 15 percent, month over month.
- Ms. Dalmolin and Ms. Lenner went to a D.C. Fly In, and they were able to meet with Arizona Legislators, as well as Department of Transportation (DOT) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) representatives.
- Transit Employee Appreciation was celebrated at Mountain Line on March 18th. The Transit App offered Rate Your Ride between March 16-18 and many positive results were shared with employees. This event has been celebrated nationwide for several years.
- Our National Transit Database report was completed and submitted on time. Thank you, Ms. Collins!
- TripQuest is a tool for evaluating our transit system. The results are reviewed quarterly. Leadership Team members are required to ride the bus once a quarter, and GM Team members are required to ride once a month.
- The DCC building has been called Flagstaff's Front Porch recently. She would like to find a way to market that. Snow and public art photos were shared.
- New operators and trainees, as well as promotions, were shared.
- April anniversaries were recognized.

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The Board considered a motion to convene an executive session. At approximately 11:07am, Director Sweet made a motion to go into executive session. Director Williams seconded. There was no discussion. All approved, none opposed. Motion carried.

NAME	YES VOTE	NO VOTE
Jeronimo Vasquez	X	
Josh Maher	X	
Tony Williams	X	
Miranda Sweet	X	
Lori Matthews	X	

Executive sessions are closed to the public.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

The executive session was convened at approximately 11:09am pursuant to A.R.S. § 38-431.03 for the following purpose:

1. Consultation and discussion with Mountain Line's legal counsel for legal advice and with Mountain Line's legal counsel and staff regarding Mountain Line's Fiscal Year 2024 Financial Annual Audit: A.R.S. § 38-431.03(A)(2), (3) & (4).

Following the conclusion of the Executive Session, the Board reconvened the public meeting at approximately 12:04pm.

ITEMS FROM COMMITTEE AND STAFF:

Chair Vasquez reviewed the proposed May agenda items. Ms. Dalmolin noted that staff are preparing to hold the June Board meeting in the new Community Room at the Downtown Connection Center (DCC).

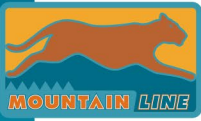
SCHEDULE NEXT MEETING DATE AND IDENTIFY AGENDA ITEMS

May/June Working Agenda

The Board and TAC Joint meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 21, 2025. It will be held in person at the Flagstaff Aquaplex, in the Community Room, 1702 N. Fourth Street, Flagstaff, AZ 86004 at 10am. Lunch will be offered. The public is invited to attend. May agenda items may include but not be limited to the Budget Presentation, Financial Plan Projections, Changes to Federal Funding Assumptions, Compensation Study, Organizational Structure Review, Legislative Priorities, Zero Emission Bus Transition Plan Update, Downtown Connection Center (DCC) Civic Space, Kaspar Maintenance Facility, Transit Access Improvements, First Mile Last Mile, Performance Scorecard Review – Goal Setting, Review Strategic Plan and Workplan, Strategic Planning (Proposition 488), Triennial Review Closeout Report, Workforce Utilization Report, and Delegation of Authority Updates. The May 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 Board and TAC.

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The next Board meeting will be held on June 18, 2025, and it will be a hybrid in-person and Zoom meeting based in Flagstaff in the Community Room, 216 W. Phoenix Ave., Flagstaff, AZ 86001 at 10am. The public is invited to attend. June agenda items may include but not be limited to Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Changes – Public Hearing to Open Public Comment Period, Budget Adoption, User Fee List for Facility Use, Commercial Driver's License (CDL) Course Use Report, Collective Grant Resolution, Procurement Resolution, Line of Credit, Personnel Policy Manual Update, Annual Cybersecurity Report, and Delegation of Authority Updates. The June 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 Board.

15. ADJOURNMENT -Chair Vasquez adjourned the meeting at approximately 12:06pm.

Jeronimo Vasquez, Chair of the Mountain Line Board of Directors

ATTEST:

Rhonda Cashman, Executive Assistant and Clerk of the Board

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