



Mountain Line

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Board of Directors Minutes for Wednesday, January 21, 2026

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, January 21, 2026, at 10:00am in the Mountain Line Ponderosa Room, 216 W. Phoenix Ave., Flagstaff, AZ 86001. 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:

Josh Maher, (Chair), Associate VP for Community Relations, NAU, designee;
Miranda Sweet, (Vice Chair), Vice Mayor, City of Flagstaff;
Tony Williams, Vice President of Student Services, CCC, designee, left at approximately 11:44am;
Jeronimo Vasquez, Board of Supervisors, Coconino County, arrived at approximately 10:03am;
Lori Matthews, City Councilor, City of Flagstaff, left at approximately 11:25am

**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;
Jacki Lenners, Deputy General Manager;
Sam Short, Workforce Director;
Megan Coons, Finance Director;
Codi Weaver, Human Resources Manager;
Anne Dunno, Capital Development Manager;
Heather Higgins, Purchasing and Contracts Officer, (Zoom), joined at approximately 10:10am;
Bizzy Collins, Strategic Performance Planner, (Zoom);
LaReina Reyes, Associate Transit Planner, (Zoom);
Greg Mockta, Facilities Technician III, left at approximately 10:08am;
Jon Matthies, IT Manager;
Rhonda Cashman, Executive Assistant and Clerk of the Board;
Scott Holcomb, Mountain Line Attorney, (Zoom)

GUESTS PRESENT:

Jeff McKay, Vice President for Capital Planning and Campus Operations, NAU, alternate, joined at approximately 10:03am;
Karen Kruse, The Kruse Group;
Jill Barnett, TransPro Consulting, left at approximately 10:39am;
Kellie Melleady, TransPro Consulting, left at approximately 11:11am;

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Five Members of the Free Mountain Line Project Group

1. CALL TO ORDER -Chair Maher called the meeting to order at approximately 10:02am.

2. ROLL CALL

3. SAFETY MINUTE

-Sam Short, Workforce Director

Mr. Short reported on winter driving conditions.

4. MILESTONE ANNIVERSARIES

-Heather Dalmolin, CEO and General Manager

Ms. Dalmolin recognized the December and January milestone anniversaries. She also recognized the December retirement of Bernice Tullie.

5. CALL TO THE PUBLIC

There were two members of the public in attendance at the meeting that were interested in speaking and there were no public comments received via email.

Mico Gooden, representing the Free Mountain Line Project Group, remarked that there are lots of reasons he supports free transit, while some are personal, he has served as Coordinator for Shelter Services for two months. He shared that he is supportive of free fare for homeless people who cannot afford a bus pass. He stated he is overall appreciative of the Mountain Line service.

Evyn Yeager, also representing the Free Mountain Line Project Group, shared she has been a member of this group for one year now and she would like to see free fare in place by August 2027. She shared that Mountain Line staff are trailblazers capable of doing hard things.

6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

- a. Regular Meeting 10/15/2025
- b. Board/TAC Advance 11/19/2025
- c. Special Meeting 12/1/2025

Director Sweet made a motion to approve all three sets of minutes for October 15, 2025, November 19, 2025, and December 1, 2025. Director Matthews seconded. There was no discussion. All approved, none opposed. Motion carried.

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

DISCUSSION / ACTION ITEMS:

7. LEADERSHIP AMERICAN PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION ASSOCIATION (APTA) REPORT

-Jacki Lenners, Deputy General Manager
(No Staff Report)

Ms. Lenners shared that she had 33 potential executive level leaders in her Leadership APTA class. She said she applied one other time before she was accepted. She reported Mountain Line was the smallest agency represented and she enjoyed the honest talk, where there was an opportunity to meet with CEOs and discuss industry challenges. She noted that the class was divided into small groups to complete a research project and her group of five team members selected the topic of AI – Artificial Intelligence for their capstone project. She reported they did interviews, put together an executive summary, and shared a presentation at the APTA Annual Meeting in Boston in October 2025. She stated she was honored to be a part of the program.

8. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIR OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

-Rhonda Cashman, Executive Assistant and Clerk of the Board

Staff recommend the Board of Directors nominate and elect a Vice Chair from the two (2) eligible City of Flagstaff members to serve in 2026 and ascend to the Chair position in 2027.

Ms. Dalmolin stated that the Rules of Procedure do not specify which of the two City Board members should serve as the Vice Chair when it is the City's turn to serve, so an election needed to be held. Director Matthews declined the opportunity to serve as Vice Chair and made a motion to elect Director Sweet as the Vice Chair. Director Sweet accepted. Director Vasquez seconded. There was no discussion. All approved, none opposed. Motion carried.

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

9. STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE

-Heather Dalmolin, CEO and General Manager

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

Ms. Dalmolin introduced Ms. Barnett from TransPro to provide the update on the Strategic Plan work thus far. Ms. Barnett stated that stakeholder interviews were done and two in-person workshops were conducted, as well as one virtual workshop. She noted that the Board confirmed the Mission would remain the same, Getting You Where You Want To Go, with a slightly modified Vision, Leading the way with sustainable transportation that connects communities and provides value for all. She also confirmed the Values have been updated: Customer Commitment, Collaboration, Respect, Integrity, and Embrace Challenges. Finally, the Success Outcomes identified are Service Excellence, Employee Investment, Fiscal Stewardship, and Community Value. She reviewed the definitions of the overall Performance Metric by outcome and the draft metrics for the scorecard that support the Success Outcomes. She noted the next steps are to finalize the Scorecard, finalize the Tactics, draft the Strategic Plan, conduct stakeholder follow-up, finalize the Strategic Plan, present for Board adoption, and design the CEO Evaluation tool. There were no questions or comments.

10. GRANT APPLICATION FOR BATTERY-ELECTRIC BUSES

-Heather Dalmolin, CEO and General Manager

Staff recommend the Board of Directors direct staff to proceed with development of a federal funding obligation application (the 'grant application') to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) for two (2) Battery-Electric buses as awarded in 2025.

Ms. Dalmolin reported she would not normally bring the grant award or confirmation of the bus type discussion to the Board, but after last year's special situation she is proceeding with caution. She stated the funding award was for "low" or "no" emission buses, the funds are not at risk, and the Mountain Line Zero Emission Bus (ZEB) Transition Plan is in place. She noted it is the timeline that is critical; it only takes about eight weeks to build a bus, but with increased bus manufacturing demand it is about getting "in line" for the approximate 30-month bus build/delivery process. She reviewed the application timeline and confirmed proposed next steps as we go through the process. There was some Board discussion around how language used in the application can make a difference, the importance of being nimble, the deadline, and what is driving the timeline. It was noted that Northern Arizona University (NAU) is in the process of ordering an electric bus, and the type of bus does impact delivery; it was also asked what it would take to convert the buses that serve the campus to no emission buses. Ms. Dalmolin followed up with a comment that the 60-foot buses have a 15-year service life, and the plan is for replacement with battery-electric buses at end of life. She noted this would be included in the Operational Assessment conversation. Director Vasquez made a motion to proceed with the recommendation. Director Matthews seconded. There was no discussion. All approved, none opposed. Motion carried.

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

11. COMPREHENSIVE TRANSIT ALIGNMENT

-Bizzy Collins, Strategic Performance Planner

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

Ms. Collins stated the goals of the transit alignment are to reduce duplication of service, increase efficiency, and maintain excellent transit service and access for riders. She noted that under the Phase One agreement there would not be any changes to the Route 10 agreement, NAU service would become transit service in compliance with FTA, open to the public, no financial transactions, include NAU data in Mountain Line monthly and annual reports, and unlock grant opportunities currently only available to Mountain Line. She noted this will specifically help secure Mountain Line with future Small Transit Intensive Cities (STIC) funding benchmarks and potentially help with access to funds for NAU's bus storage facility, benefits for both agencies. She noted future phases may be determined by the Operational Assessment that includes NAU as project partners, to include a clear picture of future fiscal impact and potential for cost savings, better transit connections for off-campus student housing, and supporting NAU sustainability goals. Mr. McKay stated he is trying to get the necessary approvals from NAU. Ms. Dalmolin stated the agreement, when executed, will be noted under the Delegations of Authority report. There were no questions or comments.

12. FY2026 EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT SURVEY RESULTS

-Sam Short, Workforce Director

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

Mr. Short stated the employee satisfaction survey has been done at least annually since 2002. He introduced Ms. Melleady from TransPro to review the results of the most current survey. She explained this is Wave 4 for data comparison purposes; the survey was administered in October 2025. She noted there were 55 respondents from across the organization, equivalent to a 57 percent response rate, resulting in a score of 74, which is a strong score. She reviewed the four core elements of engagement and stated the score is holding steady. Next, she reported on the Key Employee Perception Results: Performance, Feedback, Job Satisfaction, Management, and Employee Safety. Then she shared some of the Open Responses, also known as Key Insights. She reported the next steps are to share the report with all staff, identify trends, strategize and develop opportunities, and adopt a framework for follow-up. Chair Maher shared his appreciation for the work being done. There were no questions.

13. ARIZONA MUTUAL AID COMPACT

-Sam Short, Workforce Director

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Staff recommend the Board of Directors approve the adoption of the Arizona Mutual Aid Compact and authorize the CEO and General Manager to execute the agreement.

Mr. Short stated Mountain Line has had an agreement with Coconino County to provide aid since 2019 during the Museum Fire. He noted the agreement entered then will expire this year. He explained that NAU, the City, and the County have already signed the agreement. He communicated that having this agreement already in place before the onset of a disaster is beneficial to Mountain Line as it identifies role and ensures funding for cost to assist, and it gives us the mechanism to ensure we are ready and available to serve Flagstaff and the surrounding area at the direction of the Emergency Operations Center (EOC). Director Matthews made a motion to approve the Arizona Mutual Aid Compact (AZMAC) as presented. Vice Chair Sweet seconded. There was no discussion. All approved, none opposed. Motion carried.

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

14. FY2027 BUDGET MESSAGE

-Megan Coons, Finance Director

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

Ms. Dalmolin presented on behalf of Ms. Coons due to ongoing audit obligations. She reviewed the six main goals for the FY2027 Budget as noted in the staff report. She shared that these are the guideposts for developing the workforce, operations and maintenance, and capital budget pieces. She noted the FY2025 Financial Audit and the Budget Process are happening simultaneously, therefore the Workforce Budget and Operations Budget will both be presented in March as two separate reports. There was a question about budgeting for AZ Snowbowl service. Ms. Dalmolin stated that we don't typically know if we will have a commitment from AZ Snowbowl during the budget process, so the funds are built in as a contingency. She shared that for the upcoming season and for future consideration, we will have the results of the Operational Assessment to assist with this effort. There was no further discussion.

15. FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION (FTA) DRUG AND ALCOHOL PROGRAM AUDIT

-Sam Short, Workforce Director

Staff recommend the Board of Directors adopt the FTA Drug and Alcohol Program Audit Corrective Action Plan.

Mr. Short stated that Mountain Line was selected for a drug and alcohol audit this year; specifically done by FTA auditors with some contractors. He shared that staff were notified in

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advance and the audit took place in November 2025. He noted the categories that were reviewed: Policy Manual Review, Drug and Alcohol Program Manager interview, Records Management Review, and Urine Collector and Breath Alcohol Technician Interviews. He reported that samples are collected by NextCare, our third-party administrator. He communicated that the following are required corrections:

- Policy Manual Corrections,
- Drug and Alcohol Program Management (DAPM) Corrections,
- Records Management Corrections, and
- Urine Collector/Breath Alcohol Technician (BAT) Corrections.

He noted that it was identified that the third-party collector hours do not cover our service hours and we are dependent on them for our compliance. He shared that there was a suggestion to contract with clinicians outside of office hours to be available for testing. He said the Corrective Action Plan includes receipt of the final report, a 90-day Corrective Action Plan, Third-Party Administrators, and a Report to the Board of Directors when concluded. There was a question regarding what triggered the audit. Mr. Short stated that it is random and Mountain Line has not been audited in his 15-year tenure. Ms. Dalmolin said she remembers the audit being done last under Coconino County in 2005, before the formation of NAIPTA. She shared that she heard Cottonwood, Flagstaff, and Kingman were all being audited this fiscal year. There was another question about how to ensure compliance from the third-party administrator. Mr. Short stated that in addition to performing sample testing to audit procedures of the contractor, he plans to get certified as well as having the Safety Coordinator get certified to do the outside office hours testing in house. He shared that the bottom line is there are limited resources in Flagstaff. Ms. Dalmolin also noted that staff have been trying for two years to get saliva tests approved to avoid privacy issues associated with urine collection for testing. Vice Chair Sweet made a motion to approve the FTA Drug and Alcohol Program Audit Corrective Action Plan as presented. Director Williams seconded. There was no discussion. All approved, none opposed. Motion carried.

| NAME | YES VOTE | NO VOTE |
|------------------|----------|---------|
| Josh Maher | X | |
| Miranda Sweet | X | |
| Tony Williams | X | |
| Jeronimo Vasquez | X | |

16. FIRST MILE LAST MILE (FMLM) UPDATE

-Anne Dunno, Capital Development Manager

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

Ms. Dunno reviewed the partnership between Mountain Line and the City to use FTA grant funds that are being matched by the City. The City is performing project management duties. She reviewed the Highway 180 pedestrian crossings in final design review by the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) and slated for construction in spring 2026 at Meade Lane, Anderson Road, and Forest Avenue. She communicated that another set of pedestrian crossings are planned for Soliere Avenue, with final design review pending with the City and

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construction slated for summer of 2026. She confirmed the total award was approximately \$6 million. She noted the Fanning/Industrial Sidewalk project should be done this month. She said the contractor, Kinney, is developing the Guaranteed Maximum Price (GMP) for the discussed projects and will push to get this work done this year. There were no questions or comments.

PROGRESS REPORTS:

There were no questions regarding the progress reports.

17. HUNTINGTON/GRANT PEDESTRIAN CROSSING AND BUS STOP AMENITIES

-Anne Dunno, Capital Development Manager

18. DELEGATIONS OF AUTHORITY

-Heather Dalmolin, CEO and General Manager

19. SUMMARY OF CURRENT EVENTS

-Heather Dalmolin, CEO and General Manager

Ms. Dalmolin shared the following highlights:

- December and January anniversaries were recognized.
- Lower ridership may be attributed to the automated people counter data being scrubbed, and November had two less business days.
- Mountain Express launched in December and will be available every weekend through March.
- New Year's Eve service was 58 percent higher than the prior year.
- Kaspar Maintenance Facility has exterior site work being done by Kinney and demolition of Shop 0 is slated for mid-March.
- The Route Assessment Team has been formed to engage staff in assessing route and service improvement. This engagement is a timely response to feedback from the Employee Survey.
- Congratulations to Megan on the FY2024 Financial Audit completion.

ITEMS FROM COMMITTEE AND STAFF:

SCHEDULE NEXT MEETING DATE AND IDENTIFY AGENDA ITEMS

February/March Working Agenda

The next Board meeting will be held on February 18, 2026 and it will be a hybrid in-person and Zoom meeting at the Mountain Line Ponderosa Room, 216 W. Phoenix Ave., Flagstaff, AZ 86001 at 10am. The public is invited to attend. February agenda items may include but not be limited to the 2025-2030 Strategic Plan, Legislative Priorities, Ability to Access Impact Fees for Necessary Transit Infrastructure Costs, Reduce Liability Limit to \$11 Million and Join Insurance Pool, Disadvantaged Business

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August Service Changes, Impact of Vehicle Rehabilitation, Triennial Review Closeout Report, Meeting Calendar Update, Downtown Connection Center (DCC) Phase 1 Closeout, Kaspar Maintenance Update, and Delegation of Authority Updates. The February 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.

20. ADJOURNMENT -Chair Maher adjourned the meeting at approximately 11:57am.

Joshua Maher

Josh Maher, Chair of the Mountain Line Board of Directors

ATTEST:

Rhonda Cashman

Rhonda Cashman, Executive Assistant and Clerk of the Board

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