

**South Central RTD
Board of Directors Meeting
Wednesday,
August 25, 2021 - 1:30 PM
Dona Ana County Government Center
845 N. Motel Blvd., Las Cruces, NM 88007**

MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Javier Perea, RTD Chair, City of Sunland Park
Nora Barraza, RTD Vice Chair, Town of Mesilla
Majorie Powey, Village of Williamsburg
Diana Trujillo, City of Anthony
Lynn Ellins, Doña Ana County
James "Slim" Whitlock, Village of Hatch
Cathy Harmon, City of Elephant Butte

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Yvonne Flores, City of Las Cruces
Sharon Thomas, Citizens Advisory Committee

SCRTD STAFF:

David Armijo, SCRTD Executive Director
Sara Vasquez, SCRTD
Adam Shea, SCRTD

OTHERS PRESENT: Becky Baum, RC Creations, LLC, Transcriptionist

Javier Perea called the meeting to order at approximately 1:45.

1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE (1:45 PM)

ALL STAND FOR THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.

2. ROLL CALL

A quorum was determined to be present.

3. CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

There were no changes to the agenda. Motioned by Diana Trujillo, second by Majorie Powey. Passed unanimously.

4. PUBLIC INPUT

There was none.

5. APPROVAL OF AGENDA - Handled via agenda item three.

6. APPROVAL OF SCRTD MEETING MINUTES OF July 28, 2021

There were no changes to the minutes. Motioned by Diana Trujillo, seconded by Majorie Powey. Passed unanimously.

7. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

David Armijo gave the Executive Director's report which included the Discussion Items. The New Mexico DOT grant application will take effect October 1, 2022, through September 2023. Mr. Armijo took a bus with Transportation Supervisor Loretta Gallegos to do a trial run for the Hatch Chile Festival. They are working closely with the school district staff heading the festival; been done for over 40 years. There will be two days of transportation from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm with vendors, sponsors, a morning parade, and limited shuttle service. The schedule was done and a map was shown of the area and stops. SCRTD is a Gold Sponsor.

For the NMDOT grant projections of ridership had to be done based on previous levels; a graph was shown of past ridership numbers; currently carrying over 6,000 on a regular basis. The projection generates roughly 64,000 trips for the year which is significantly higher than last year's due to the pandemic. Adding services and improving services benefited the increase.

There was discussion of school districts and shortage in teachers and staffing; dispatcher and operator are needed. There was discussion on how to bring more interest, social media and banners at the facilities. Indeed brings interest to positions but most of the applicants don't have CDL license. There is a hiring bonus for referrals; \$100.00 at the front end and another \$100.00 after training. There was discussion on shortages in bus drivers.

Staff is working on a human resource policy update to bring to the Board either in September or October. This will include pay scales based on numbers and analysis with comparable positions in the area. Mr. Armijo commented that he was impressed with Martin Perez who is a new dispatcher. There was discussion on safety measures with driving. There was discussion on the grant application. One portion is ridership and transit system statistics. FY20 ended last year in September while FY21 will end this year in September; FY22 was projected based on the numbers from FY20 and FY21.

Productivity is broken down into three different categories. Operating cost per mile shows a dramatic drop due to number of rides relative to cost remaining constant with rides pushing it up. There is a 10% projected improvement. If the border to Mexico is opened then the information will change and the numbers will be pushed up. Operating cost per trip shows a drop of almost half from 2020 to 2021 with a modest increase in 2022.

There was discussion on what a trip entails and what operating costs include a trip is on way and the operating costs include fuel, labor, and etcetera. There was discussion on the projections; they are conservative. There was discussion on the census; suburban, urban, and rural. There will be new buses coming in the first of the year which will allow staff to retire the oldest buses in the fleet; will have ramps instead of lifts which is much easier to use.

8. DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEMS:

a. Hatch Chili Festival Shuttle September 4-5

Discussed in the Executive Directors Report.

b. Approve Resolution FY 2023 ICIP Plan

Nora Barraza motioned to approve Resolution FY 2023 ICIP Plan, seconded by Diana Trujillo.

Adam Shea gave the presentation. The ICIP Plan covers FY23 through FY27. There are four projects currently on record; five were included in the submission, two were deleted and one was added. The current projects include transit vehicles and bus shelters purchase at \$952,560.00, bus facility improvements for \$465,000.00, bus stop shelters improvements and placement for \$88,000.00, and vanpool project for \$90,000.00. These amounts have been approved and are waiting for the funding over the next five years; total of \$1,587,560.00. The two projects removed were because of lack of momentum; construct a transit facility and an intermodal facility.

There was discussion of bus stop shelter locations, undetermined at the moment. The county bus stop at the airport needs a canopy. Staff is working with the City of Anthony to place a shelter. Mr. Armijo commented that in May the county staff wished to charge \$700.00 for a permit to put the shelter in place but other shelters didn't have the additional cost. He will send the documents to the Board to seek help; was \$350.00 and jumped up. Staff is investigating grants with the El Paso MPO for a shelter in front of the facility. Staff has been researching some form of a trailer which are set up to have restrooms on them and canopies; set up the bench underneath. Mr. Armijo suggested having a discussion of spending a few dollars to put a shelter in place or spend a little more money for something that will protect more.

Motion passed unanimously.

c. FY2021 District Audit Kick-Off

Adam Shea gave the presentation. August 30th is the start of the annual audit. Documentations have been given to the auditor and the Board received an e-mail from Mr. Shea regarding a questionnaire from the auditor. A meeting has been set up so Chair Perea can join while away for August 30th. The auditors will request what is needed as they work. Historically this is the earliest beginning to the audit; very optimistic that it will go well. There was discussion on how long the process will take; staff side should be finished before December; auditor's side is unknown but shouldn't take long. The auditors will be in the office for at least a week. Chair Perea stated his travel plans have been canceled and he will be available.

d. Approve Amended Drug and Alcohol Testing Policy

David Armijo gave the presentation. The only difference on the policy is requests from the federal government; all the people properly certified, amended paperwork from USDOT, remove the old forms, and etcetera. This includes all employees. Companies doing the certification were listed as well. There was some wordsmithing done as well as keeping in the employee forms.

Nora Barraza motioned to approve; second by Lynn Ellins.

There was discussion on the professionals out of El Paso rather than Dona Ana County. This is due to needing someone do the work 24/7 and there were challenges with operations people in Las Cruces. They will search for more local companies in the coming year.

Motion passed unanimously.

9. BOARD COMMENT

Nora Barraza asked how many FTE's are employed through the RTD; 25 currently with one vacancy. There are no part time positions. There are also four additional budgeted positions to total the FTE's to 30. There was discussion on when the next meeting is. There was discussion on Gerald LaFont; he retired. Mr. Armijo will add a proper introduction of Ms. Harmon on the next agenda as well as the opening for a vice chair. Nora Barraza asked Ms. Harmon to congratulate Gerald LaFont on his retirement. Mr. Armijo stated he will send out the 10 year plans to the Board Members.

10. ADJOURNMENT - Next meeting September 22, 2021


Chairperson