

ITEM #6 July 26, 2023

**South Central RTD
Board of Directors Meeting
Wednesday,
July 26, 2023 - 1:30 PM**

MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Javier Perea, RTD Chair, City of Sunland Park
Nora Barraza, RTD Vice Chair, Town of Mesilla
Majorie Powey, Village of Williamsburg
Manuel Sanchez, Doña Ana County

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Diana Murillo, City of Anthony
Yvonne Flores, City of Las Cruces
Robert Martinez, Village of Hatch
Sharon Thomas, Citizens Advisory Committee

SCRTD STAFF:

David Armijo, SCRTD Executive Director
Sara Vasquez, SCRTD
Cristina Gamboa, SCRTD
Loretta Gallegos, SCRTD
Veronica De La O, SCRTD
Adam Shea, SCRTD

OTHERS PRESENT:

Katarina Provenghi, Mesilla Valley MPO

Becky Baum, RC Creations, LLC, Transcriptionist

1. CALL TO ORDER

Javier Perea called the meeting to order at approximately 1:35.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ALL STAND FOR THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.

3. ROLL CALL

A quorum was determined to be present.

4. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

There were no changes to the agenda. Motioned by Nora Barraza, second by Manuel Sanchez. Passed unanimously.

5. PUBLIC INPUT

There was none.

6. APPROVAL OF SCRTD MEETING MINUTES OF June 28, 2023

The Councilor from Sunland Park arrived late to the meeting. The amendment was recommended to include a discussion regarding Mr. Armijo's contract.

Motioned by Nora Barraza to approve the minutes with amendment, seconded by Manuel Sanchez. Passed unanimously.

7. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

David Armijo gave the Executive Director's report. The Transportation Appropriations Bill has been moved forward in the Senate, but it is different from the House Bill. These will need to be reconciled. The Bill is looking at funding the 5311 and 5310 funds which pertain to rural/suburban transportation and helping seniors and individuals with disabilities to become more mobile. This will have an impact on FY24 and beyond. Funding would not be available until September or October at the earliest and could be used to accelerate some of the capital projects that are ongoing. Mayor Barraza was happy about the possibility of funding, but she did not anticipate Federal funds being available until much later. Mr. Armijo discussed the RTD's goals and objectives: Obtaining electric buses is going slowly. The funds should be accessible within the month and then some of the old buses can be replaced. One of the old buses has about 350,000 miles on it and is really ready to be retired. Other Urban Grant funds are coming available and will be executed soon as well. The City of Anthony's new program will also be coordinated and hopefully the transit center in Anthony can have shelters. There will also be more shelters installed in the County over the next year. Investigation continues into passenger amenities, and some will be executed. Employee training will increase. Local services will continue to operate, and research will begin into what it will take to go into Sierra County. Mr. Armijo plans to bring his ideas on that to the next meeting. Discussions will be reopened with the City of Elephant Butte and the County of Sierra to see where they are in the project, as well as Dona Ana County for help. This may require redesigning the Hatch route and reinstating the Garfield part of the service. This year Mr. Armijo hopes to complete the acquisition of the Sunland Park facility and install electric charging stations. Small electric buses are expected to come in the fall before the big ones arrive next year. He will also look at where service recommendations can be implemented for the Ten-Year Plan. There were service increases planned for 2022 that could not be done due to lack of resources and buses. Once funding and buses are available, these can be brought back on the table, as well as adding more connections. The Plan also includes adding Saturday service in 2025. This can perhaps be moved forward if funding comes available. Commissioner Sanchez asked about the priorities in these plans, and mentioned that he would love to implement zero fares across SCRTRD and including RoadRUNNER Transit in the activity, so that throughout Dona Ana County there would be free transportation on fixed routes. Commissioner Sanchez also would like to do a pilot project on one of the lines with Saturday service to see how it goes as soon as the funding comes available. He suggested the Green or Red Line to see if riders would come up to Las Cruces to visit the mall or other recreational places. Mr. Armijo remembered that Wayne Hancock had hoped to have a Saturday route that included the Red and Purple Routes with multiple stops. Mr. Armijo suggested adding in the Green Route so that the proposed route would make it possible to go from the top of Dona Ana County all the way to Sunland Park and West and Downtown El Paso. He reminded the Board that they have to set the priorities. Mr. Armijo thinks that the free service may be able to be financed with the monies committed by Dona Ana County and the various Cities already participating. Commissioner Sanchez suggested looking into implementing the free fares as soon as possible and is very interested in doing the Saturday route, as he believes people would use it to go shopping and other activities on the weekend. He feels that if it was properly marketed these things would be very popular. Majorie Powey asked if disabled/seniors are allowed to ride free. Mr. Armijo answered that during the summer everyone rides free, but seniors and others requiring special considerations pay twice the regular fare. Mr.

Armijo is currently researching ability-to-pay programs in other parts of the country, but this would probably be cost-prohibitive at the moment. Mayor Barraza felt that advertising needs to be increased to increase ridership. Mr. Armijo currently has staff working on an RFP to place advertising on the buses which will generate revenue that can be used to do advertising for the RTD, also looking at doing more advertising than just the social media ads, and also the big gateway signs in all the communities. He suggested using the Community College students to produce the ads. Mayor Barraza mentioned the billboards that the Town of Mesilla uses when advertising events and suggested that the RTD look into that. Mr. Armijo agreed to work on it. Katarina Provenghi asked what kind of amenities the RTD hopes to add over the coming few years, and if they can be used in advertising to entice riders. Mr. Armijo plans to increase the number of benches and shelters around the County, as well as replacing and upgrading the signage. More information will be included on signage and buses regarding the company information and routes. Ms. Provenghi suggested using QR codes so people can use their phones to get more information. QR codes are already included on the schedules and website, and Mr. Armijo indicated interest in adding them to the buses.

8. DISCUSSION AND RESOLUTION APPROVING THE DISPOSITION OF OBSOLETE PROPERTY: RESOLUTION 2024-01

Sara Vasquez presented the Disposition Policy. SCRTD works with New Mexico Department of Transportation contractors to be sure equipment is disposed of according to NMDOT and State Regulations. There are currently two buses that need to be disposed of, and more coming up at the first of the year.

Motioned by Nora Barraza, seconded by Manuel Sanchez. Passed unanimously.

9. DISCUSSION OF APPOINTMENT OF DISTRICT PROPERTY DISPOSAL COMMITTEE

Sara Vasquez presented information on the Disposal Committee that should be appointed. The Chair will select two to three Board Members to review the disposal items before taking action. The buses are currently in Sunland Park and the appointed Board Members will examine them, then come back with their report, and then the Board will make a final decision based on the report. Section 8.0 holds the complete information on this committee. Sara Vasquez hopes to have the Committee set up at this meeting or next. Mayor Barraza recommended using the Procurement Officer, Executive Director, and Board Chair as the Committee. Chair Sanchez agreed that Adam Shea and Chair Sanchez should be the Committee. Majorie Powey saw in the Annotations a mention of dogs and asked why it was there. Mr. Armijo suggested that it was left over from the City use of the Bylaws.

10. DISCUSSION AND RESOLUTION APPROVING THE AMENDED DRUG AND ALCOHOL TESTING POLICY: RESOLUTION FY24-02

Sara Vasquez presented the changes to the policy: On page 11, add at/or to the final sentence of paragraph 2 under the eye drug testing procedures. This has been done. On page 26, Attachment A to identify the safety-sensitive positions which include drivers, dispatchers, and mechanics. On page 27 in the comments on the Medical Review Officer, to make sure the training certificates are provided, and this has been done. Two new Substance Abuse Professionals had to be hired because the previous personnel were not responding to communications. Sara Vasquez thanked Loretta Gallegos for helping with this. Mayor Barraza asked if the attorney had looked at this policy. Mr. Armijo replied that the attorney sees Federal Transit Administration documents but changes regarding drug and alcohol policy are so numerous that the documents would spend a large amount of time with the attorneys. There will be an audit in about 30 days by the State of New Mexico which will examine all the policies. Mr. Armijo suggested doing a presentation to the Board on this subject to bring Members up to date. He can send this to the attorney if needed. The attorneys available and registered to work in the State do not necessarily have the expertise to advise the Board. Mayor Barraza asked if the Board has ever done an RFP for attorney fees. Mr. Armijo has identified a few people in the State, so it would make sense to create a contract with one. Mayor Barraza indicated that it would be a good idea to have an attorney on hand to read the documents before implementation in future. Mr. Armijo indicated that attorneys are not interested due to lack of money available. Mayor Barraza indicated that the Town of Mesilla pays their lawyer on an hourly rate. She confirmed that Mr. Armijo and his staff are comfortable with the amendments. Manuel Sanchez suggested that SCRTD go in together with the Mesilla Valley MPO to go for bid to a lawyer. This would provide more money to entice lawyers. Katarina Provenghi indicated that her staff are still looking for attorneys and all questions should be forwarded to Andrew Wray.

Motioned by Nora Barraza, seconded by Manuel Sanchez. Passed unanimously.

11. DISCUSSION AND RESOLUTION APPROVING THE FY24 ICIP PLAN: RESOLUTION FY24-03

Adam Shea presented the ICIP for fiscal years 2025 through 2029. The deadline for this was a few weeks ago. Included items are: Fleet conversion to electric, purchase of the Sunland Park facility, refurbishing the Anthony facility, purchase of buses for the replacement of the current fleet, and a van pool expansion. Mayor Barraza felt that these items have been discussed thoroughly.

Motioned by Nora Barraza, seconded by Manuel Sanchez. Passed unanimously.

12. DISCUSSION AND RESOLUTION APPROVING FY23 END OF YEAR FIXED ASSETS: RESOLUTION FY24-04

Adam Shea presented the fixed assets report. This is required for auditing and for the NMDOT to approve the current fixed assets for the SCRTD. The list is provided to the Board Members and the yellow items are part of the disposal. Under Depreciation-Fiscal Year 2023, the amounts are zero because the value has already been expensed. The disposals are listed but their value is zero. Actual numbers show \$2.782 million in fixed assets of initial value; after depreciation, total value is \$2.115 million. Mr. Perea requests approval so that it can be passed on to the auditors.

Motioned by Nora Barraza, seconded by Manuel Sanchez. Passed unanimously.

13. DISCUSSION AND RESOLUTION APPROVING THE 4TH QUARTER ADJUSTMENT TO THE FY23 BUDGET: RESOLUTION FY24-05

Adam Shea presented the adjustments to the FY23 budget, moving money from one account to another to cover overages in the destination accounts. The net change amounts to zero. This adjustment was done after the actuals were applied. Mayor Barraza asked if the FY24 budget has already been created with the adjustments included so there will be fewer adjustments needed during the year. In the Revenue section, there is a credit adjustment of \$58,903.40 due to the submission of the Texas 5307, bus fares collected throughout the year, collaboration with the New Mexico Division of Vocational Rehabilitation to provide monthly bus passes, and a \$60,000 commercial loan that was required to continue operations as the Texas FTA funds had not been received. There was also a \$5,830 increase in miscellaneous income due primarily to insurance claims received. There is an adjustment from the Capital page to the Revenue page of the Texas 5307 funds.

Motioned by Nora Barraza, seconded by Majorie Powey. Passed unanimously.

14. DISCUSSION AND RESOLUTION APPROVING THE 4TH QUARTER FINANCIAL REPORT FY23: FY24-06

Adam Shea presented the Fourth Quarter Financial Report. Cash on Hand is \$68,900.20; Expenditures were \$2,152,236.64 but \$2,121,517.60 was expensed; balance remains about \$30,000 of unused money; billed but not received is about \$311,842.22, leaving \$311,842.22 balance. Roughly \$168,716.21 will be carried over into the new year from the CARES, Rural, and Intercity funding, as well as about \$135,000 outstanding from the Texas 5307 funds. Mr. Armijo spoke with Federal Transit Administration Dave Bartles and believes this is the last leg of the run and that next week the grant will move forward. The

Texas 5307 funds look to be around \$294,000. All the money except the \$135,000 is already set aside and many funds expended are reimbursed. Mayor Barraza asked if these monies are Federal or State. The majority of them are Federal Transit Administration funds. She further asked if there is any money in the bank to pay the bills, and the answer is "Yes." The bills are all caught up and the loan is going to be paid back. Under Capital, only 23.7% was billed or received due to the fact that the \$5 million received late last year for the purchase of the Sunland Park facility and conversion to electric, etc. has yet to be expensed.

Motioned by Nora Barraza, seconded by Manuel Sanchez. Passed unanimously.

15. DISCUSSION AND RESOLUTION APPROVING THE FY24 ANNUAL BUDGET: RESOLUTION FY24-07

Adam Shea presented the FY24 budget. He felt that the expenditures have been nailed down more firmly this time. Under Personnel Services, including the Employee Benefits, there will be an increase of 6.8% over last year's budget. This accommodates the 5% salary increase the Board approved last month and also takes into account the New Employee Bid for the routes going forward. David Armijo explained that the New Employee Bids are done twice a year and take into account the mileage, service hours, and other duties and breaks offered to employees. Then, the employees can choose which routes they wish to work and senior employees get first pick. Majorie Powey brought to Mr. Shea's attention that the new handout shows the correct increase of 7.3%, as he was reading from the old handout in his hand. The overall expenditures in FY24 over FY23 is 10.6%. The conversion to electric, new software, and other new expenditures mean that the new budget shows an increase of 10.6%. The revenue for FY24 will have a 5.9% increase over FY23 based on the actual grants and funding the SCRTD will be receiving. Under Capital there is a decrease of 12.9%. This is based on actuals and has a lot to do with the Sunland Park facility project. Mayor Barraza hoped that the new budget will not require as many budget adjustments throughout the year as the old budget did.

Motioned by Nora Barraza, seconded by Manuel Sanchez. Passed unanimously.

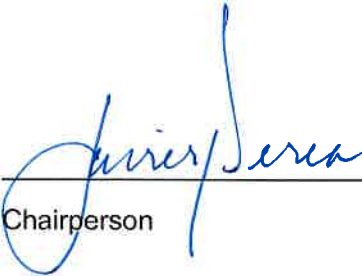
16. BOARD COMMENT

Mayor Barraza thanked staff for their patience, knowledge, and research. She congratulated staff for the fabulous job they have done bringing the SCRTD to where it is now.

Manuel Sanchez echoed the Mayor's sentiments and encouraged staff and Board Members to continue growing the SCRTD.

Javier Perea also thanked staff and the County for their support. He asked staff to relay his thanks to the County Commissioners.

17. ADJOURNMENT - Next meeting August 23, 2023



Chairperson