



**Transit and Rail Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
April 12, 2013
1:00 - 4:00 PM
CDOT/HQ Auditorium**

| Members Present | YES | NO | Members Present | YES | NO |
|------------------------|------------|-----------|------------------------|------------|-----------|
| Larry Worth | X | | Ann Rajewski | X | |
| Terri A. Binder | X | | Peter J. Rickershauser | X | |
| Craig Blewitt | X | | Jim Souby | X | |
| Vince Rogalski | | X | Michael E. Timlin | X | |
| Todd Hollenbeck | X | | Bill Van Meter | X | |
| Jonathan Hutchison | | X | Jacob Riger | X | |
| David Johnson | X | | Danny Katz | X | |
| Tim Mauck | | X | Mike Ogborn | X | |
| Kurt Ravenschlag | | X | Sara Cassidy | X | |

| Others Present | CDOT Present |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Ray Krueger, Accessibility Plus | Mark Imhoff, David Krutsinger, Tracey MacDonald, David Averill, Tom Mauser, Julia Spiker, TJ Dlubac, Dylan Grabowski, Jason Wallis, |

The meeting was called to order by Chairwoman Rajewski at 1:15 p.m. She first asked for updates from members.

- Craig Blewitt reported that MMT had resumed evening service as of April 1. Buses run until 9:15.
- Bill Van Meter reported that the West light rail line will be opening at the end of the month, with ceremonies and free rides on April 27. The Eagle project was given its first Congressional appropriation under its Full Funding Agreement. It came in at \$141 million rather than the scheduled \$150 million, but RTD can proceed. RTD was given FTA acceptance to enter an application for New Starts funding for the southeast extension.
- Jim Souby reported that ColoRail will be meeting June 1 in Denver, with major topics being DIA access and CDOT's transportation planning process.
- Mike Timlin reported that the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) shut down a number of private bus carriers for safety reasons. One of them is Rimrock Stages, whose routes in Montana and adjoining states were shut down. Fortunately some other carriers stepped in to continue service. The problem is mostly with equipment. He also reported that the Southern Ute Community Action Program (SUCAP), which is scheduled to begin intercity bus service between Durango and Grand Junction, has obtained an interline agreement with the MBTA, which allows its service to interline with the ticketing of other operators.

- Jacob Riger reported that DRCOG has issued a call for Section 5310 projects, in response to the new MAP-21 requirements. He reported that long-time employee Steve Rudy has retired. He also reported that he had been promoted to a new position at DRCOG as the long range planning manager; members congratulated Jacob.
- Mark Imhoff reported that CDOT was instituting its new RAMP program, which is advancing about \$300 M per year from funds that were budgeted for future year projects but won't be spent until those future years. Rather than set the funds aside CDOT will make them available for other projects on a competitive basis, using different categories of projects. The funding is expected to be available for five years, after which time CDOT will have about \$167 M per year available as a result of paying off its TRANS bonds.
- Mark also reported on a proposal, referred to as MPACT64, being developed by some business interests to improve transportation funding. The group may go to the ballot with an initiative in the 2014 election. A sales tax is likely to be favored over a gas or other tax.
- Ann reported that the CASTA Spring Conference was being held in Black Hawk May 14-17.

Next were reports from the various subcommittees.

- **David Averill** reported on the Performance Measures/Asset Management subcommittee, which met recently and included a discussion of its role. The subcommittee agreed to start with the request that it recommend a new allocation formula for FASTER Local funds in response to CDOT's change of Region boundaries. The subcommittee will also examine CDOT's methodology for using metrics to award funds for bus purchases. He explained how CDOT used a formula that favored bus miles over bus age but then shifted it to 60% to 40%. The subcommittee will recruit some operators who are impacted by this change to serve as subject matter experts. The goal will be to recommend a scoring methodology for bus replacements. Dave pointed out that his unit was now developing a transit grant module system and would soon initiate a transit asset inventory project. He indicated that performance measurement had become a huge issue and that we need to be considering how we will link with the new statewide transportation plan being developed.
- **John Valerio** reported on the Regional-Commuter Bus subcommittee, which is now engaged in a final development of a plan for potential services on the I25 and I70 corridors. Among other things, the subcommittee and staff are identifying bus needs, developing a purpose statement, developing the language for Inter-Governmental Agreements (IGAs) for participating local agencies, conducting outreach, determining how to maintain the buses used for the service, examining access to stations, and developing a service plan. Many presentations are coming up, in the form of public outreach meetings. A meeting is being held with CDOT Regions re: park-and-rides. Weekday service is envisioned on the I25 corridor, 7 days/wk on the I70 corridor. DTR would use up to \$2.5 M per year for this service from the FASTER Transit Statewide pool; RAMP funding might be sought for facility improvements. Diesel buses are favored over CNG due to the steep mountain climbs and the lack of adequate facilities and maintenance for CNG buses. A financial plan with options is being developed, and it was determined that the Transportation Commission would be the governing body for the project. Working groups are being developed to tackle some specific issues.

Some concerns were raised by TRAC members about the need for good ridership estimates, the risks to transit and to such services if this project was not successful, and the use of funding for operations. Craig pointed out the importance of a sufficient operating reserve, esp. in light of the fact that FASTER funding is a fixed and not growing source. Jacob expressed concern about the need to respond to a proven demand and not spreading the service out too thinly. He thought it important to set forth a goal for each corridor in terms of performance. Concern was expressed that CDOT required applicants seeking funds for expanded services to develop a business plan yet CDOT did not seem to be developing such plans for these services.

Mark addressed the question of why FASTER funds would be made available for regional and commuter bus services but not for local and shorter regional bus services. He pointed out that there were a number of shorter bus routes that could be considered regional and that providing operating funds to them would draw down much FASTER funding and leave little for capital. Furthermore, once operating funds are provided, it is difficult to withdraw them.

- **Tracey MacDonald** reported on the State Transit Plan/Long Range Transportation Plan subcommittee, indicating that the Transit Plan had just been contracted and gotten under way. She went over the extensive membership list, which has many non-TRAC members, and pointed out that there were kickoff meetings the following week for internal staff. Felsberg, Holt & Ullevig is the prime consultant, with a number of subs.
- **TJ Dlubac** reported on the two meetings held of the Outreach/Education subcommittee. Their stated purpose is to ‘assist DTR with telling its story.’ That includes reaching average citizens, creating databases of information of interest, working with CDOT’s Public Information Office, creating FAQs for the website, and getting info out there. It was suggested that Amy Ford, the new director of the PIO, be brought into a TRAC meeting.
- **Jason Wallis** reported on the Freight Advisory Committee, which has 3 members from TRAC and actually is a revitalization of a committee that was formed a number of years ago but had died from lack of participation and interest. It will be re-started using self-determination for deciding its purposes. For the next 6 months it will advise CDOT on its Freight Plan, which will mostly be focused on highway freight, since there already is a Rail Plan. They may identify projects, which would be locations for improvements that serve freight interests.

TRAC members were asked if they liked subcommittees reporting back like this. Someone indicated it depended on whether staff input was provided if needed, and on meeting in between TRAC meetings if needed. Someone suggested conference calls if needed, since there is such a long time between TRAC meetings, and given that issues like the Performance Measurement subcommittee’s allocation may have to be made before the next TRAC meeting. It was suggested that DTR develop a master calendar showing major activities of DTR, TRAC and its’ subcommittees. It was also suggested that DTR call for agenda items a week before the agenda is sent, and that staff get out subcommittee materials in advance of meetings so there are fewer surprises.

Kurt Ravenschlag of Fort Collins TransFort was unable to attend and make a presentation about the BRT system being developed there. David Johnson of RFTA made a presentation describing the VeliciRFTA BRT being developed in the Roaring Fork Valley between Glenwood Springs. (See PowerPoint presentation.)

TRAC responded positively to the possibility of having a future FasTracks update. A tour of Denver Union Station was especially favored.

Tom Mauser pointed out changes being made in the Job Access-Reverse Commute (JARC) and New

Freedom programs as a result of MAP-21 legislation that eliminated the two programs but made them eligible under other existing programs. He indicated there were concerns about “grandfathering” them in under those programs and the impacts on other existing grantees. For the time being DTR will likely be able to grandfather some of those projects in using old, unspent funds, but at some point will have to address the issue.

Jim Souby added another update, pointing out that the DU Intermodal Transportation program was sponsoring a “Greening of the Transportation System” session at the Cable Center May 15 from 9-1:30. Meeting was adjourned at 4:00.