

# Southwest Chief and Front Range Passenger Rail Commission Draft Meeting Minutes

Friday, October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2021  
9:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.  
Meeting held remotely via Zoom

COMMISSION MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Member Name	Member Role	Organization	Attendance
Jill Gaebler	Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments	City of Colorado Springs	Yes
Chris Wiseman	Pueblo Area Council of Governments	Pueblo County	Yes
Becky Karasko	North Front Range Metropolitan Planning Organization	NFRMPO	Yes
Rick Klein	Resident of Huerfano, Las Animas, Otero, or Pueblo Counties	City of La Junta	No
Sal Pace – Vice Chair	Passenger Rail Advocate	Resident of Colorado Springs	No
DJ Mitchell	Class 1 Railroad Representative	BNSF Railway	Yes
Nathan Anderson	Class 1 Railroad Representative	Union Pacific	Yes
Phil Rico	South Central Council of Governments	Mayor of Trinidad	Yes
Jacob Riger	Denver Regional Council of Governments	DRCOG	Yes
Jim Souby – Chair	Passenger Rail Advocate	ColoRail	Yes
Bill Van Meter	Regional Transportation District	RTD	Yes
Vacant	Colorado Department of Transportation	CDOT	
Rob Eaton*	Amtrak	Amtrak	Yes
Dale Steenbergen*	Cheyenne, Wyoming	Chamber of Commerce	No

\*Non-Voting Members

Others: Spencer Dodge (SWC & FRPRC), David Singer (CDOT), Chris Enright (CDOT), Lisa Sakata (HNTB), Mandy Whorton (Peak Consulting Group), Nathaniel Minor (CPR), Mark Northrop (PPACG), Dan Kline (WYDOT), Anthony Vaiarella (Public), Geoff Guthrie (CDOT), Bill Craven (NMDOT), Tim Hoover (CDOT), Art Griffith (Douglas County), Jim Tylick (BNSF), John Liosatos (PPACG), Kristin Kenyon (FTA), Deborah Mulvey (City of Castle Pines), Dominic Spaethling (HNTB), Mark Langley (AECOM), Erin Bergquist (TRC), Brian Vitulli (City of Colorado Springs), Jeff Dawson (CDOT), Melanie Monarco (WSP), Dervis Cemal Akcicek (CDOT), Tom Mason (Cheyenne MPO), Amber Haines (Parsons), Ryan Mulligan (Parsons), Jose Soto (LiUNA), Lisa Streisfeld (CDOT), Will Howard (Public)

## **A. Call to Order and Introductions – Jim Souby**

Jim Souby called the meeting to order at 9:30am.

## **B. Review/Approval of September 24<sup>th</sup> Draft Commission Meeting Minutes – Jim Souby**

Jacob Riger commented that Councilmember Deborah Mulvey was in attendance, that addition will be made. DJ Mitchell made a motion to approve the September 24<sup>th</sup> Draft Commission Meeting Minutes. Jill Gaebler seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

## **C. Public Comment Period – Public**

There were no public comments.

## **D. Staff Report – Spencer Dodge/David Singer**

Spencer Dodge presented his monthly staff report. Highlights included: public involvement with MPO Boards and governing councils, Randy Wheelock has been identified as the representative from the I-70 Coalition, Jim Souby, Jill Gaebler and Spencer Dodge presented on a FRPR Panel at the Colorado Transportation Symposium, and a presentation to the States for Passenger Rail Coalition. David Singer provided a CDOT staff update including FRA coordination, User Experience Memo, Risk Register maintenance, and project specific work. Jacob Riger thanked Spencer for presenting to the DRCOG Board.

## **E. Southwest Chief**

### *2018 PTC CRISI Grant – David Singer*

David Singer provided an update on the 2018 CRISI Grant. The project is moving along well, construction is substantially complete and is expected to finish in the next month. Testing activities will wrap up in Q1 of next year.

### *2019 CRISI Grant: Thru-Car Alternatives Analysis Update – Spencer Dodge*

Spencer Dodge provided an update on the Thru-Car Service Alternatives Analysis. The project team submitted a Project Management Plan and Stakeholder Engagement plan, received comments from FRA, and are preparing to resubmit those deliverables. Additionally, the project team has been working with the Class 1 railroads to discuss appropriate data sharing. David Singer also added that continued coordination with Pueblo has been ongoing with their station area plan.

## **F. Front Range Passenger Rail**

### *2020 CRISI Grant: FRPR SDP and Rail Simulation Modeling Update*

David Singer provided an update on the 2020 CRISI Grant. In the previous month, the Rail Commission provided \$1.62m in additional funding for the Service Development Plan. That same request was made of the Transportation Commission, who also provided that amount. This expands the budget for the Service Development Plan which will allow for more thorough corridor development. Jim Souby added that this budget would not be enough without the participation of BNSF Railway, Amtrak, and Union Pacific.

## **G. Other Items**

### *Amtrak Update – Rob Eaton*

Rob Eaton informed the Rail Commission that they are still monitoring Congress for news on the IIJA bill. Rob does not anticipate that being resolved soon. Amtrak is talking with the various committees in Congress regarding the need for passenger rail funding. Rob added that funding for rail is going to be mostly found with FRA, especially on corridor development. Amtrak is expecting an FRA process that identifies future corridors. The criteria for this process are still being developed. Rob also informed the Rail Commission that the Winter Park Express will be running again this year.

Mayor Rico suggested a one-pager exemplifying the various grants and their accomplishments to date from the Rail Commission. That work is beginning to take shape, particularly through the Final Report process. DJ Mitchell offered assistance from BNSF Railway to put those items together.

## **H. Confirm Next/Future Meetings**

The remaining Rail Commission meeting this year is December 10<sup>th</sup>.

## **I. Adjourn**

Jim Souby adjourned the meeting at 10:13