

**Southwest Chief Commission (SWC Commission)  
Meeting Minutes  
July 7, 2016  
Pueblo, City-County Health Department**

Member	Representing via HB 14-1161	Yes	No
Sal Pace, Chairman	Resident of Pueblo or Huerfano County – public rail advocate	X	
Rick Klein, Vice Chairman	Resident of Las Animas, Otero, or Prowers County – public rail advocate	X	
Elena Wilken	Public Rail Transportation Advocate		
Jim Souby	Tourist Industry in Colorado	X	
Pete Rickershauser	Freight Rail Industry	X	
Mark Imhoff	Colorado Department of Transportation Representative (David Krutsinger represented in absence)	X	
Ray Lang	Amtrak Representative	X	

Additional Attendees: David Krutsinger, Ed Vigil, Senator Larry Crowder

Phone Attendees: John Maddox, KDOT; Frank Sharpless, NMDOT

**I. ATTENDANCE/EXCUSED**

**A. Call to Order/Roll Call/Opening Remarks**

A lot accomplished since the SWCC was created by the legislature a few years back. Rick's leadership on the TIGER grants has been important to \$47 Million in total investment so far in saving the Chief Line. Front Range passenger rail is the long term goal. This is a necessary step toward that.

**B. Approval of Minutes (January 7, 2016)**

Minutes: Klein motions, Souby seconds. No amendments or changes. Approved unanimously.

**II. REGULAR AGENDA**

**A. Welcome from Chairman Pace & Introduction of Guests**

Chairman Pace welcomed Senator Larry Crowder and State Representative Ed Vigil.

**B. Statewide Debrucing Ballot Initiative & impact on Transportation (Maria Garcia-Berry)**

Some highlights include

- "Colorado Priorities" / Initiative 117 is putting an initiative on the ballot to De-Bruce Colorado for ten years
- \$13 to \$41 returned per person to average citizen based on income if refund 2014-15 funds.
- Proposal: suspend TABOR caps for 10 years: at least 35% to education, at least 35% to transportation, rest to senior services and/or mental health services
  - Not a tax increase
  - Not a constitutional amendment
  - Not a change to formulas distributing funds

- Revert to TABOR inflation/population limits after 10 years, using a new base of highest year funding of the 10 years.
- Transportation: 60% to state, 22% to counties, 18% to cities (40% local)
- Still allows SB 228 transfers to flow
  - \$158 M FY1617
  - \$221 M FY17/18 through FY1920
  - \$70 to \$100 M/year FY2021 through FY2526
- In petition gathering mode now.

SWCC discussed taking a position on the matter and Jim Souby called for a motion for the SWCC to provide their support, Pete seconded. Approved unanimously.

**C. Commission Briefings to Governor & Leg Leadership (Sal Pace)**

**D. TIGER GRANT VI update (Pete Rickershauser)**

The rail relay work has been completed for the La Junta sub-section, including 5 miles in Colorado, east of the Las Animas Junction to about Caddoa. Ray Lang noted the Amtrak train has traveled the track and it is making a difference in travel time. This has taken care of a badly needed replaced section.

**E. TIGER GRANT VII update (Rick Klein)**

TIGER VII will improve much of the rest of the line. The majority of the payments have been received and the contracts are being finalized. Finishing paperwork with FRA. The drop-dead date is July 18<sup>th</sup> to start construction, with permission to finish other paperwork after that. The Categorical Exclusion was approved.

**F. Revenue / Ridership Studies (Amtrak)**

Amtrak is using an outside consulting firm to do R/R analysis to set budgets, and explore new service. Some highlights include -

- Feb/March SWCC talked about possibility of incremental step towards full reroute. Through car is the name of that concept. Dedicated cars cut at La Junta and move independently.
  - 8:15 AM in La Junta to Pueblo
  - Evening from Pueblo to La Junta
  - Infrastructure costs are less in this segment than in Pueblo – Trinidad segment
- Study shows 20 passengers per day each direction - 40 per day total. Annually more ridership than all the communities in Colorado.
- Granted not optimal service due to it being a through-car.
- Full-fledged re-route would significantly grow that ridership.

The Commission discussed what the next step should be and Vice-chair Klein Motioned to send a letter to Amtrak to ask BNSF and UPRR about capital infrastructure needs between La Junta and Pueblo. Pete: amended the motion with date desired. Chairman Pace suggested the end of July.

The Commission discussed if this meant Trinidad and New Mexico were now not part of the route. The Commission agreed that is not the intent in adding Pueblo. The Commission agreed that there are several steps in what the commission is doing and the goal needs to be clear, but it is an incremental effort.

Pete Rickershauser seconds the motion. Motion passes unanimously.

**G. Cost for Pueblo Through Car (Amtrak / BNSF)**

A through car to Pueblo opens opportunities. There is time available in the schedule to go to Colorado Springs and get back to Pueblo before making a connection to La Junta.

**H. August Amtrak Exhibit Train Stop – Pueblo (Jim Souby)**

- Sponsored by Pueblo Model Railroad Association, Pueblo Railroad Museum. Representatives of those groups are here today.
- August 6-7<sup>th</sup>, Saturday & Sunday: 9 AM – 4 PM
- Amtrak is bringing exhibit train to the Pueblo Depot.
- Modest charge to see the museum exhibit, but no charge to see Amtrak train.

**I. SWC Technical Assistance (David Krutsinger)**

Scope of work minimum no-bid contract by July 30 2016. Pete Rickershauser moved to accept Jim Souby seconded, motion passed unanimously.

**J. State Commission Terms (David Krutsinger)**

A suggestion will be made to the Governor to re-appoint Pete Rickershauser, Jim Souby, and Rick Klein as all are willing to serve another two years.

We will hold a Vision discussion at our next quarterly meeting

**III. ADJOURN**

Meeting was adjourned.

Southwest Chief Commission (SWC Commission)  
Pueblo City-County Health Department - 101 W. 9th St., Pueblo, CO 81003  
Thursday, July 7, 2016 10:00 a.m.

*Call in: 1-719-583-2009 Participant code: 2151#*

Commission Members: Sal Pace, Chairman  
Rick Klein, Vice Chairman  
Elena Wilken  
Jim Souby  
Pete Rickershauser  
Mark Imhoff  
Ray Lang

- I. ATTENDANCE / EXCUSED
  - A. Call to Order / Roll Call / Opening Remarks (Chairman Pace)
  - B. Approval of Minutes (April 7, 2016)
  
- II. REGULAR AGENDA
  - A. Welcome from Chairman Pace & Introduction of Guests
  - B. Statewide Debrucing Ballot Initiative & impact on Transportation (Maria Garcia-Berry)
  - C. Commission Briefings to Governor & Leg Leadership (Sal Pace)
  - D. TIGER GRANT VI update (Pete Rickershauser)
  - E. TIGER GRANT VII update (Rick Klein)
  - F. Revenue / Ridership Studies (Amtrak)
  - G. Cost for Pueblo Through Car (Amtrak / BNSF)
  - H. August Amtrak Exhibit Train Stop – Pueblo (Jim Souby)
  - I. SWC Technical Assistance (David Krutsinger)
  - J. State Commission Terms (David Krutsinger)
  
- III. ADJOURN